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THE

CASE

OF THE

PEOPLE OF ENGLAND,

ADDRESSED TO THE

"LIVES AND FORTUNE MEN,"

BOTH IN AND OUT OF

The Houſe of Commons;

As a Ground for National Thankſgiving!

By one of the 80,000 incorrigible Jacobins.

Eſpecially give us Grace not to be elated with Proſperity.

Form of Prayer and Thankſgiving.

Here—take an Inventory of all I have;
To the laſt Penny 'tis the King's! *Shakeſpeare.*

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TO THE

LIVES AND FORTUNE MEN.

GENTLEMEN,

THE people of England have been commanded by a royal proclamation, to ſet apart a day from the ordinary buſineſs and purſuits of life, to perform an act of national humiliation and thankſgiving, to Almighty God, for the victories and ſucceſs with which he has crowned the arms of this country. The propriety of ſuch an act ought to be as clear as the act itſelf is awful. For the ſuſpenſion of the induſtry of the city of London for a ſingle day, is of ſuch immenſe conſequence to a commercial community, that it can only be juſtified by ſtrong and urgent reaſons. But its induſtry is ſuſpended in the preſent inſtance, to celebrate a feſtival of gratitude to the Giver of all good things; of whom, we are amongſt other things commanded to pray, *that we ſhould not be elevated by Succeſs*. No prayer can be more proper;—but in the mean time permit me to aſk you, Gentlemen,

Gentlemen, whether ſuch a prayer is at the preſent moment neceſſary? And whether we are quite correct in celebrating a feſtival of ſucceſs and victory.

At leaſt I fear that this proclamation is not quite in uniſon with the public feeling. The people of this country do not want much religious diſcipline to ſubdue their arrogance or exultation: their wonder, or rather their indignation, is excited, when they hear this language of triumph held by the very men who have ſo lately called on them, for ſuch immenſe and cruel ſacrifices, not to ſupport the glory, but to preſerve the exiſtence of the country. The pomp and ſplendour of a public ſpectacle is a ſorry compenſation to them and their ſtarving families—the delight of ſuch a ſcene is loſt in the bitter recollection of the means, by which its expence muſt be defrayed. For the proceſſion to St. Paul's forms a wretched contraſt to the debates and votes of the committee of ſupply.

Indeed the conduct of the government and propertied orders of the community, is not very conſiſtent with prudence and common ſenſe—It is not a happy comment on their own declarations, nor a good pledge of their ſincerity. The generous and confiding people entered into this war becauſe you bade them do ſo. It was *your* intereſt that they ſhould fight—for it has been a war, in defence of order and property—It has been a war therefore, almoſt excluſively *your own*. What they have ſuffered and ſacrificed

crificed in your defence, you ought to know, if you have taken care, that they have not been plundered and cheated gratuitouſly; and there is no ſuffering and ſacrifice that you called on them to make, which they have not readily complied with. You ſtill told them that all would end well. The end it is true is not yet come. But as you have now in the ſame breath called on them for help, and commanded them to celebrate good fortune, they have a right to know of you, (and depend upon it they will one day know) how theſe apparent contradictions can be reconciled; why they are to undergo freſh ſufferings, and what advantages they have gained from thoſe that are paſt.

And but that you have told us, and that you have the high authority of his Majeſty for your opinion, that it was expedient to offer thankſgiving for ſucceſs; it would not be a very exaggerated ſtatement of our preſent ſituation, to ſum it up in one comprehenſive term—Ruin. For to what a condition is the country reduced by the war? What a contraſt is the year 1792 to the year 1797.—From proſperity we have paſſed to bankruptcy.—From vain-glory to deſpair! This tranſition of events is as ſingular, as the taſk of detailing them is diſguſting! But the tranſition of public feeling, when its grounds are conſidered, is both natural and juſt. Thoſe who are guilty of intemperance in one extreme will be guilty of it in the other:—this is true of nations as well as individuals.

You

You who were ſo clamorous for war becauſe confident of ſucceſs, call in a little honeſt memory to aſſiſt you, in recollecting your motives and language in the year 1792. Do you believe, that had France and England held their preſent relative ſituations in the year 1792, that your moral ſenſibilities would have been as irritable againſt atheiſts and jacobins, or that you would have been as eager to aſſert the cauſe of order and religion, as when the alluring bait of national aggrandizement, and commercial gain, tempted your ambitious luſts, and made you firſt adopt as a pretext for war, the Anarchy of France; and then delude yourſelves into a belief that you had never engaged for any other object than that holy and righteous cauſe? No. A commercial nation never yet had ſo much generous Quixotiſm about its character. I remember well the ſpeculations that were indulged in, weak and wicked as they were: I remember the vaunting preſumption that led you to imagine that the declining commerce, ruined manufactures, and unprotected colonies of France, would be an eaſy prey to your ſuperior reſources. Commercial men are ſaid to take unfair advantages of each other in private life: commercial nations will do the ſame: though it is queſtionable whether diſhoneſty is good policy in either caſe.

But let your hopes of 1792 have been what they may, in 1797 they are at leaſt diſappointed. The war, whether it was begun for aggrandizement or glory

glory, is now continued for exiſtence. *We affect therefore to celebrate the Victory, when we ought to be content to ſurvive the ſtruggle.* In France we no longer behold a people ſuing for peace, divided amongſt themſelves, agitated by fierce and bloody factions, with civil war in her heart and a powerful confederacy on her frontier: we do not now behold a land covered with blood and mourning, nor her moſt eminent citizens dragged in crouds to the ſcaffolds of her revolutionary tyrants!—Nor does the miniſter of this country (as then he did) hold in one hand the balance of European fate, whilſt with the other, like the Argantes of Taſſo, from the folds of his robe, he ſcattered death and war and famine over a devoted world. The lowly head has been raiſed, and the proud laid low. We, who at firſt came forward full of reſources and with all Europe for our ally, now remain ſingle and exhauſted, to conclude the conteſt. Whilſt with the whole principle of her ſtrength yet entire, France has detached, either by force or perſuaſion, almoſt every power of Europe from our cauſe, and attached them to her own.—Well may the people aſk the reaſon of your rejoicing at ſuch a proſpect—well may they droop. For would it not be to reaſon in an inverted order, if we were able to accompliſh that in a ſtate of weakneſs which we were unable to perform in a ſtate of ſtrength. I ſay not this to diſhearten the people—At the preſent criſis he would be an enemy to his country that would

do ſo. But it is not therefore neceſſary to *delude* them; they have been already too long and often the victims of deluſion, or the country would at this inſtant have repoſed on the boſom of Peace. It is to prevent a continuation of that deluſion that I now write; unleſs this is effected, I am as ſure as I am that I exiſt, that the country is ruined. You may by a military goverment extort requiſitions; you may proclaim faſts and celebrate victories; and the people may ſtarve in ſilence, whilſt you triumph with impunity. But you will not by theſe means ward off the danger which you know threatens you, nor render it leſs terrible becauſe its extent is diſguiſed and its arrival protracted. You muſt aſcend to the origin of the evil, if it is to be removed. All palliatives, all expedients are worſe than inſufficient in ſuch a ſtate of affairs as the preſent. Either perſevere in your ſyſtem, or reſolve to adopt a new one. And do ſo, whilſt yet it is permitted you to make a choice: If you will do this, honeſtly and ſincerely, I truſt that there is yet left to the cauſe of England, all that ought ever to have made her confident;—the juſtice of ſelf-defence.

For however I reprobate that ſentiment of exultation in which I think the Engliſh people indulged at the beginning of the war; ſtill it is the exceſs, or rather abuſe, of a generous feeling.—But deſpair can never be conſiſtent with the dignity of a great people. Political inactivity can never be juſtified; whilſt the common

common-wealth exiſts, it ſhould never be deſpaired of. The coward only lies down and dies, the brave man, even in the midſt of adverſe and ſinking fortunes, can find wherewithal to conſole and even adorn his fall. I do not therefore for one credit the oppoſition to the full extent of their declared ſeceſſion. I ſtill think it is but a political manœuvre; but whether it is or is not, of this I am ſure, that in times like theſe to indulge in deſpair is diſgraceful, but to record it is a crime—he ſurely will be eſteemed by enlightened and impartial hiſtory as the wiſer and better example, who buries in the diſtreſs of his country all ſenſe of private wrong, than he who cheriſhing a peeviſh reſentment at her ingratitude, undoes at the ſame time his country and his own glory. Therefore I hope and truſt that the people do not deſpair—languid they have hitherto been, but they have been ſo for want of a cauſe to awaken their energies; but give them a cauſe, " and they will arouſe as a giant from ſleep, or a " ſtrong man refreſhed by wine."

What France has been, I truſt England can be. If peace was ſought in the ſpirit of ſincerity, I ſhould commend the man who refuſed to compromiſe the intereſts of his country for an ignominious repoſe. What I thought of the ſpeculations of the allied powers, that think I now of the councils of France; they are the dreams of a diſtempered ambition: for, as when her frontier was invaded by a foe that thought to

make her a prey, through her weakneſs, every heart beat thick with indignation, and every arm was lifted up to aſſert the cauſe of liberty and man; ſo ought ſhe to recollect that in this country the ſame cauſes will produce the ſame effects; every order and claſs of men will, I hope, combine their efforts with a common and equal zeal to preſerve their independence, and to prevent our being what we never yet have been, a conquered nation. We ſhould not, I hope, be conquered even into liberty. For I hold that nation to be unworthy, if not incapable of freedom, which cannot free herſelf. But France has, on this ſcore, ſurely held out no very extraordinary temptations. I think that Engliſhmen will do well to remember the fate of Holland, of Venice, and the Cis-Rhenane republic before ſhe imitates their example.—But we can neither think rightly nor act juſtly without full and free enquiry. We muſt aſcend to the fountain head, or our energy will avail us little. Let us remember that it is of neceſſity impoſſible for men to reaſon juſtly from wrong premiſes; and as we act in conformity to our opinions, we muſt aſcend at once to firſt cauſes and principles, or we had better reſt where we are. Now with reſpect to the preſent war, it is ſo obviouſly and cloſely connected with the French revolution, that it is impoſſible to diſcuſs the one without alluding to the other. I ſhall not enter into an analyſis of its cauſes; all that I know of it is, its effects. They were in France a radical change in

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the ſocial ſyſtem; in other countries an agitation of public ſentiment, producing great, and in ſome inſtances alarming diſſenſions, as that event correſponded to the hopes or fears of men. In this country there appeared from the firſt three leading parties: thoſe who conceiving that it had ſubſtantiated the power of a political ſect and doctrine, which had long been riſing in France, and which had a tendency to ſubvert the whole principle of European ſociety, contemplated the overthrow of the antient regimen in France with terror, and ſaw only in the new order of things, a monſter, againſt which the whole force and energy of exiſting ſociety ſhould be inſtantly exerted. They conceived that it was an abſurd and dangerous delay, to wait for the formality of *overt* acts of aggreſſion, from a ſyſtem, which of itſelf was a grand *overt* act againſt all contrary modes of eſtabliſhed authority and uſage. They conceived, that however the leaders of the riſing ſect might temporize, yet there was an hoſtility inherent in their ſyſtem, which muſt at ſome time or other manifeſt itſelf againſt the oppoſite one, and that its leaders were impreſſed with the perſuaſion, that both ſyſtems could not co-exiſt. They therefore were deſirous of inſtantly oppoſing it by declared and open warfare, becauſe it was as yet weak, as being in a ſtate of embryo and experiment, whilſt the regular governments, whoſe intereſt it was to cruſh it, were entire

entire and mature. This is the party of the late Mr. Burke.

Oppoſed to theſe, if not in the other extreme, yet certainly *magno intervallo* ſtood the party of Mr. Fox, and thoſe who, however they differed on ſubordinate points of ſpeculation, have acted and thought with him. They beheld in the French revolution the triumph of Liberty over deſpotiſm, of reaſon over error, of mankind over their oppreſſors. They indeed knew that a free goverment muſt give to France a power greater than ſhe had ever poſſeſſed under her deſpotiſm. But although they believed that the continent of Europe might be materially affected by ſo great a change, and that it would be the means ſooner or later of reverſing the whole ſcheme of its civil regimen; yet in this proſpect they ſaw nothing but matter of triumph and exultation to Britons; certainly nothing for which the reflecting mind muſt not have been long prepared by the events of the laſt and the preceding century.

The intrepidity of thought that had effected a reformation in religion, had ſpread itſelf to civil government. The Italian republics, the Hanſeatic league, the emancipation of the people of Holland, the commonwealth of England, the revolution of 1688, and laſtly the independence of America, were a ſeries of revolutions connected by a chain of neceſſary cauſes. They were only *different Æras in the Hiſtory of the ſame Principle*, viz. the gradual prevalence

lence of Freedom over Tyranny. The French revolution could not therefore be to them a matter of ſurprize, for as from each of the preceding events freſh diſcoveries and bolder experiments had been made in political ſcience, ſo all theſe examples ſerved to be to France, a baſis on which wider notions of polity and more enlarged conceptions of human nature might erect the fabric of ſocial inſtitution. Nor could they conſider the change which had taken place in France as a matter of alarm to this country—they rather foreſaw in it the happieſt political conſequences: much of that national hoſtility, which had been the cauſe of ſo many wars between the two countries, had not been ſo much owing to a *competition in politics*, as to great and eſſential *differences of opinion*. The intolerance of a blind and ferocious bigotry, joined to the ſpirit of a deſpotic government, were in France exaſperated againſt a contrary mode of Faith, and a more liberal ſyſtem of political relations. That furious zeal which had oppreſſed the Hugonots, which had oppoſed the reformation, which had propagated its faith by fire and ſword, was united in the councils of Louis XIV. with an inſatiable thirſt of conqueſt and glory. In England that faith had been expelled, the maxims and form of deſpotiſm exploded; and her religious and civil liberties conſolidated by the revolution of 1688. Hence the wars which aroſe between her and France, (although power was the oſtenſible, as well as a component

ponent cauſe) yet they were more or leſs a conflict and war of opinions: until therefore one or other of the oppoſite ſyſtems was deſtroyed, there appeared but little probability of ſincere or laſting repoſe. But *ceſſante cauſâ ceſſat effectus*, the overthrow of the French government and its eſtabliſhed religion ſeemed to Mr. Fox's party to have overthrown alſo the principle of animoſity between the two nations. And the erection of a free government in France, as it gave the people of the two countries a ſympathy of habits, intereſts, and ſentiments, opened not only a proſpect of conciliation and repoſe, but of ſtrict amity and cordial friendſhip and union.

Intermediate between theſe was the party of Mr. Pitt, or rather the great body of the Engliſh public who ſupported his adminiſtration. In ſome reſpects they differed and in ſome agreed with each of the others. As it is of importance to a clear conception of the real deſigns of the miniſtry in entering into the preſent war, that their general opinion of the French revolution ſhould be aſcertained; I have taken pains to eſtabliſh my ſtatement of it by ſuch documents and evidence as it has been in my power to collect: theſe I cannot here bring forward, as a full expoſition of their contents is incompatible with the ſize of a pamphlet. The great body of the people, who never look to remote conſequences, and who judge of events by their immediate effects, expreſſed a general and honeſt joy at the firſt overthrow of

of the deſpotiſm of France, becauſe they conceived that the people muſt be happy when they were free. But this was no more than a vulgar prejudice, which did not contemplate the tendency of ſuch a change with reſpect to France or Europe. Like every opinion of the people it was liable to rapid and capricious fluctuations, as that event unfolded itſelf in conſequences, which the common apprehenſion of mankind had been incapable of foreſeeing. Therefore as they continued to judge by appearances, their favor or disfavor ſucceeded each other, as the revolution wore an aſpect favorable or unfavorable to their national prejudices. For inſtance, I believe the joy at the emancipation of the French was general, until in eſtabliſhing their freedom they deviated from the mode of Engliſh liberty. When they aboliſhed hereditary diſtinctions, and rejected the plan of a divided legiſlature, the Engliſh public no longer reſpected in its detail the liberty it had applauded in its principle. But this amounted to no more than ſpeculative diſlike, a diſlike natural to the mind of man whilſt it is governed by paſſions and ſympathies. But the government of England was a diſtinct body from the public: they had never from the firſt cordially rejoiced at the freedom of the French; they obſerved indeed a cold and rigid ſilence as to their internal affairs, although I believe that in the abſtract they diſliked the principle of the revolution, becauſe its genius was adverſe to the ſyſtem of their own power, the former being

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founded on democratic, the latter on ariſtocratic and propertied intereſts. But I conceive that they thought interference inexpedient for two reaſons: 1ſt. That the temper of this People, and the abſence of the neceſſity which had produced a change in France, rendered the influence of French principles ſlight and feeble, and conſequently did not menace their power with an alarming danger. And the other, by far the moſt important, (ſince I conceive that the ſpirit of this principle has been the maſter policy of the war) is a reaſon that was admirably adapted to the half informed part of a commercial public: viz. the effects which the revolution was likely to have on the *Power of France*, particularly on her commerce, her manufactures, and her finances; the decline of which, as they were objects of rivalry between her and England, would proportionably give the latter an aſcendancy in the ſcale of nations. I ſhall endeavour to prove hereafter, that this policy, as it at firſt diſpoſed the miniſtry to be neutral, ſo it afterwards from change of circumſtances induced them to go to war. In ſhort, that their *one and only object has been foreign and domeſtic Power*.

I have ſtated the different principles of theſe parties, to prove the reſpective claims of each to ſound political calculation, and I think that if there is a truth ſuſceptible of demonſtration it is, that from the views, the reaſoning, and the conduct of the preſent miniſter, he has proved himſelf not only

to

to have been unequal to the exigency of ſo important an occaſion: but that he is as incapable of great political deſign, as of ingenious and original reſource: of the merit of his policy we may judge, by comparing it with the opinions of the other parties, illuſtrated as they have been by the progreſs of the French revolution and the war. And on the meaſures which he has adopted to attain his ends, a little attention to the hiſtory of events, and their effects, will enable us to determine. And let it be remembered that if he is convicted of errors in judgment, in the courſe of this review, he has not the ſame excuſe to plead (miſerable as it muſt be in public men, if it was pleaded at all) which ſometimes extenuates ſuch caſes. For inasmuch as both friends and enemies again and again, in public and in private, pointed out to him the fallacy of his calculations, and the ruinous tendency of his meaſures, he has added the guilt of obſtinacy to ignorance, an obſtinacy that united with deluſion, has reduced the country to a ſtate, from which, it is a doubt, whether the wiſdom or virtue of any man, will be able to redeem it.

To ſupport this opinion, viz. that power was his object; and that the ſame policy which induced him to be neutral at one time, rendered him at another actively hoſtile, I ſhall take two grounds; the firſt reſts on the external evidence, which the courſe of events, and the conduct of the miniſter before and

after the war, afford;—the ſecond on the internal evidence, that is derived from the inconſiſtency of his declarations, in his ſtatements of the objects of the war; as well as the incongruity of his ends and means.

Now on the firſt head, viz. the external evidence of the queſtion, the miniſter of this country was relieved from all apprehenſion of views of aggrandizement in France previous to the war; becauſe from her ſtate in 1789, ſhe was incapable, and had declared herſelf to be unwilling to attempt them. She had by a ſolemn decree, renounced the ſyſtem of conqueſt, nay had expreſſed doubts (Mr. Pitt perhaps thought them fanatical) whether ſhe could juſtly retain her colonial poſſeſſions. In all the debates of her legiſlature on the external intereſts of the ſtate, they not only incidentally recognized the abſolute neceſſity of peace to the completion of their work, but particularly expreſſed an ardent deſire to confirm and ſtrengthen the bands of friendſhip and amity between the two countries. From neceſſity, as well as inclination, this country had therefore nothing to fear from France.

But in the light of policy, every thing might be hoped for from her internal ſtate; and the effects which her revolution had produced on her finances. Their re-eſtabliſhment formed the chief labour of her new legiſlature. "The finances alone, demand "perhaps, for half a century, our legiſlative labours," ſaid

ſaid Mirabeau, in the debate on the *Veto*; and the declaration of Mirabeau was followed up by the conſtant attention of the aſſembly. In the mean time, their opulence, as a trading and manufacturing country rapidly declined: to this their own confeſſions and meaſures bore invariable teſtimony; whilſt this country had, in a few years, exhibited a picture of commercial reſuſcitation, unparalelled in the hiſtory of the world. Whilſt France was left to herſelf, the reeſtabliſhment of her credit appeared to be a more and more difficult taſk: for on what does the finance or public credit of a country depend? certainly on the ſtability of its government; ſince public credit is nothing more than a belief, that property is ſafe under the protective influence of the government: but the convulſion which the new order of things occaſioned, the intrigues and changes of parties, and the dread of a counter revolution, continued to check the efforts of the aſſembly to accompliſh this end; and in the mean time England was enabled from the influence of her pacific ſyſtem, to profit daily by that derangement.

Again, as to domeſtic concerns, I do not conceive the miniſter had reaſon for alarm, nor did he entertain any, leſt ſerious effects ſhould be produced by French principles in this country; becauſe in the firſt firſt place, the people *were loyal, and attached to the conſtitution, and did not ſuffer the evils which have always been neceſſary to produce a revolution.* In the next place, Mr. Pitt did not feel this alarm, ſince the

the opinions which had cauſed it had not grown up, or been diſcovered on a ſudden. They exiſted to full the ſame extent, as to the number and weight of their advocates, in the years 1790—91, as in 1792—93. Societies were eſtabliſhed in England, they correſponded with the affiliated clubs at Paris; the preſs teemed with their publications, yet all theſe facts were notorious to miniſters, and ſtill they were ſuffered to paſs nearly unnoticed. Therefore I conclude, *that there was neither reaſon for alarm, nor that alarm did exiſt in the mind of Mr. Pitt, on account of revolutionary doctrines:* for if there did, in what a predicament does he ſtand? Either he knew of the growth of theſe ſocieties, or he did not. If he did know of them, and they were of ſo dangerous a nature as to become afterwards a juſt cauſe of war, or at leaſt of ſocial agitation and alarm, the public owes but little to the providence or virtue of a miniſter, who did not cruſh the evil in its beginning. And inaſmuch as the end of laws and puniſhments is to prevent crimes, why did he not interfere before theſe treaſons had riſen to ſo alarming an height, as to require a ſacrifice from the ſubject of the bulwark of his civil liberty, the *Habeas Corpus* act: why did he not interfere before the lives of men (whether deceived or deceiving, is of no conſequence) were brought into imminent peril? If he knew of ſuch proceedings, and did not check them, he is convicted of a criminal neglect of the public weal, and a wicked abuſe of his

authority.

authority. If he did not know of their exiſtence, what credit does he deſerve for vigilance, when he was ignorant of facts that were notorious to every other man in the country.

I believe therefore that his power was ſafe, and that he believed it to be ſafe from the diſorganizing tendency of French principles, previous to the year 1792. But it was eſſentially neceſſary to the continuance of his domeſtic power to remain neutral, ſince whatever diſguſt had been excited in the people at large againſt the proceedings of the convention: and though Mr. Burke had long raiſed his cry for the cruſade; yet war was too hazardous an experiment to be undertaken by a miniſter at ſuch riſks, and under ſo equivocal a ſtate of the public ſentiment. Beſides, all that could be hoped for from the overthrow of French principles, was hoped for from the confederacy of Auſtria and Pruſſia. The expence and odium of a war could be avoided, whilſt all its benefits would be reaped gratuitouſly by the Engliſh miniſter.

Thus much for neutrality being conſiſtent with foreign and domeſtic power, previous to the year 1792.—It remains to be ſhewn why war was expedient on the ſame ground, ſubſequent to that period.

Men of the *Gironde* and of the Mountain, whatever may have been your crimes as moral agents, as republicans you ſaved France. You gave to her revolution

volution a new aſpect and complexion ; from being crippled in her energies, by the inefficient and pacific "*democracié royale*" of 1789, ſhe had aſſumed "the "port" and attributes of a military republic ! She no longer renounced former acquiſitions, ſhe made new conqueſts ; ſhe no longer deprecated the anger and jealouſy of other governments, in the language of low-voiced and puling eloquence ; ſhe bade defiance to all open and ſecret enemies, and reared againſt the whole antient world, the banner of her revolution. Inſtead of debating on the independence of a ſavage horde, or a diſtant iſland, ſhe had formally annexed Savoy and Nice to her republic. Inſtead of hunting for expedients and palliatives of finance amongſt the muſty records and tame precedents of the funding ſyſtem, ſhe ſeiſed on the collective capital of the country, a project the moſt daring and gigantic, in its conception, that is recorded in the annals of revolution. Inſtead of being a prey to foreign plunderers, ſhe had become an armed nation.

As before ſhe had contented herſelf with diſcuſſing political theories with the calmneſs of a ſchool of philoſophers, ſo now ſhe made converts by the roar of cannon, and the point of the bayonet. By theſe means ſhe had broken through the balance of power, violated all rules of finance, and conſequently fruſtrated all calculations built on her former proceedings, and converted that which was before a *moral cauſe* into a *political inſtrument*. Her empire no longer

reſted

reſted on opinion alone; it was a mixed principle of power and ſentiment, the one upholding and ſpreading the other.

I think then that *if the attainment of power was the miniſter's policy*, this change in the ſtate of Europe, rendered a change in his ſyſtem neceſſary. France could no longer be left to herſelf; ſhe could no longer be truſted to the Pruſſian and Auſtrian confederacy;—her finances muſt now die a *violent* not a *natural* death; her power be cruſhed at once, before it became too ſtrong for Europe. But do not the language and the conduct of miniſters throughout the war tally with this notion? Look at their calculations on finance, on the depreciation of the aſſignats; look at their comparative ſtatements of the Power of Great Britain and France; look at the language held by Mr. Dundas on the annexation of Corſica to the crown of England; on the capture of the Cape of Good Hope; on the diſcuſſion of the principle of compenſation, in the debates on the late negociation for peace; look at *thoſe negociations themſelves*; and at the tenor of their meaſures during the war. Wherever other objects have been concerned, their language has been equivocal, their views indiſtinct, and the execution of their plans feeble and inefficient. Yet how vigorous and unremitting have been their efforts, how immenſe their expence of blood and treaſure, when directed to the object of power. Let the Weſt Indian expedi-

tions and our immenſe naval armaments ſpeak to this point. And then let it be decided, whether from the teſtimony of ſuch facts it is to be believed, that they were in earneſt as to the other objects of the war. Whether ſuch vigour and deciſion on one hand, and ſuch confuſion and delay on the other, can conſiſt in the ſame characters. But how ſtands the caſe from the event of the war? They have ſucceeded in the temporary attainment of one object, viz. the poſſeſſion of the colonies, and the ruin of the trade of France; and all the others are not only not attained, but are deſpaired of, and relinquiſhed by miniſters themſelves.

If we look at home, we ſhall find not only, that ſubſequent to the year 1792, war was conſiſtent with this policy, but that in fact, power the moſt unbounded has been acquired and confirmed to Mr. Pitt by that event.

The cry for war was not now uttered by a few feeble voices. The ſucceſs of French arms and principles had alarmed the political and commercial fears of the whole Engliſh public. The walls of the Houſe of Commons rang with anathemas againſt the conduct of the French, and their proſelytizing ſpirit. At the head of theſe, ſtood thoſe members of the whig party, who differing from all their old political connexions preſented to Mr. Pitt the opportunity of a coalition, which would for ever ſecure the ſyſtem of his domeſtic power. What was the reſult; that party became

came united to his intereſts; and the remaining oppoſition too feeble to form an adminiſtration. Nor can the Duke of Portland and his party now recede: they muſt conſent to continue attached to Mr. Pitt and his fortunes, or ceaſe to exiſt as political characters in this country.

Facilis deſcenſus Averni;
Sed revocare gradum ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor!

So much for the external evidence of the queſtion.

The internal evidence is to be collected

1ſt. From the inconſiſtency of the miniſter in his ſtatements of the objects of the war.

And 2ndly, from the inconveniency of the meaſures purſued to the ends propoſed.

To prove his Inconſiſtency with himſelf, I ſubmit the oppoſite Extracts from the Debates of Parliament.

Now as to the ſecond point: viz. the inconveniency of the meaſures purſued, to the ends propoſed,

I ſhall conſider it under two heads:

1ſt. With reſpect to our domeſtic tranſactions.

2dly. As to objects of foreign policy and intereſt.

Now what is the hiſtory of our domeſtic tranſactions as they relate to the war?

Firſt, whilſt it was impending, his Majeſty in his ſpeech of the 13th of December, 1792, declared;

" *That he had obſerved a ſtrict neutrality in the preſent*
" *war on the continent, and had uniformly abſtained*
" *from any interference in the internal affairs of France.*
" But it was impoſſible for him to ſee without the
" moſt ſerious uneaſineſs the ſtrong and encreaſing
" indications which have appeared, there, of an
" intention to excite diſturbances in other countries;
" to diſregard the rights of neutral nations, &c.
" Under all theſe circumſtances he had thought it
" right to take ſteps for making ſome augmentation
" of his military force, &c.—being perſuaded that
" theſe exertions were neceſſary, &c. to render a
" firm and temperate conduct *effectual for preſerving*
" *the bleſſings of peace.*

" Nothing *would be neglected on his part* that can
" contribute to that important object conſiſtently
" with the honor of this country, &c.

To this ſpeech an addreſs was returned echoing and approving it. Now what is it's import, and to what did the government ſtand pledged?

You thereby declared it to be true, that you had obſerved a neutrality in the war, and that you had abſtained from any interference in the internal affairs of France. And by having done ſo *carefully*, you acknowledged that it was right to have done ſo. With what ſtate had you obſerved neutrality and abſtained from interference? with what ſtate, did you promiſe to omit no means conſiſtent with your honour, to preſerve the bleſſings of peace?—With a republic

republic, without a conſtitution, and in a ſtate of revolution.

If then it was right to be neutral and to avoid interference, it could not be alſo right to go to war and interfere, on account of the internal affairs of that country. If peace was deſirable, and you wiſhed to maintain its bleſſings, and if it was likely to be interrupted by *particular circumſtances*, viz. views of aggrandizement, attempts to excite diſcontent, &c. if you omitted no means to obtain this end, you would endeavour to remove thoſe circumſtances; and when they were removed, would reſtore things to the original footing of peace.

And you yourſelves recognized this doctrine; you declared in the debate of the houſe, that it was not the *government* of France you armed againſt, but certain indications of hoſtility which it had betrayed by particular acts, and declarations. Mr. Dundas, a miniſter, laid down expreſsly as the grounds of war, the decree of the 19th of November, the views of aggrandizement entertained by the French, and their violation of treaties and the rights of neutral nations. Therefore theſe grounds are the *overt* acts of the goverment, and not it's *principle*, for with that his Majeſty declined to "interfere," and expreſſed a deſire to continue at peace.

This diſtinction rendered the preſent war on its original grounds, analagous in principle to all former wars that had taken place between this country and France.

You

You declared hoſtilities againſt Louis XIV. not becauſe he was a tyrant and a catholic, but becauſe his ſchemes of univerſal monarchy, and his attempt to place the Pretender on the Engliſh throne, and to ſubvert the proteſtant religion, were *acts of aggreſſion*: The former ſimilar to the conqueſt of the Netherlands, &c. the latter to the decree of the 19th of November: but when thoſe *acts of aggreſſion* were done away, you made peace with the government and religion of France. So in this caſe, as you had thought it right to remain for ſo long a time neutral, and to avoid interference; you therefore ſhewed that it was not with the *exiſtence* of republicaniſm or jacobiniſm, that you went to war. It was on account of it's *acts* that you thought it neceſſary to arm *to prevent the neceſſity of abſolute hoſtilities*. I therefore infer from your former neutrality, from your avowed deſire of peace, and the alledged grounds of impending hoſtility, that you were bound by your own declarations *to ſeek the beſt means* of removing them, and when removed, to reſtore things to their former ſtate.

Now what means can be taken by nations in the caſe of *impending* hoſtilities? Are there any other pointed out, either by the law of nations or common ſenſe, than negotiation? let me aſk the miniſters of England, whether or no, they negotiated with France in a ſpirit of ſincerity to "preſerve the bleſſings of peace?" If you were deſirous of obtaining that object, you muſt allow that it was your duty to uſe

uſe every means of conciliation with the oppoſite party, conſiſtent with your own dignity. If in him you had met with ſymptoms of a favourable diſpoſition, you would encourage and ſtrengthen the propenſity, and evince by all means, a ſpirit ready to meet pacific and healing overtures.

In private life, if you apprehended a quarrel with your neighbour, with whom you ſtill wiſhed to be on good terms, you would avoid as much as poſſible occaſions of giving freſh diſguſt; and on the contrary embrace opportunities for the renewal of good underſtanding. You would not conceive it to be a very efficacious method, to prevent hatred, to tell your neighbour to his face, that you had a deſire to continue friends, and at the ſame time blacken his character with others, on all poſſible and public occaſions, deſigning that he ſhould hear of it again: you would not, when he ſent one of his family to you to make up exiſting differences, treat that agent with ſtudied contempt, and deny his authority to act, becauſe ſome part of your neighbour's family had ſuffered in a domeſtic diſpute, in which you had before declared you would have no concern? You would not, when at length you condeſcended to talk to this agent, on the ſubject of reconciliation, take care that he and your neighbour ſhould know, that, at that very time you were inſtigating the neighbourhood againſt them, on account of the abovementioned domeſtic diſpute? Is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe

poſe that ſuch conduct could conciliate? Yet thus you acted in your endeavour to preſerve peace with your neighbour the French republic.

For did you not take every opportunity of abuſing the government and governors of France? Did you not attribute your domeſtic diſcontents to their direct agency? Was not an indecent triumph expreſſed by you at the firſt ſucceſſes of the Duke of Brunſwick, although you were then neutral and at peace? Was it conſiſtent with views of peace to deny an authority, by which only negotiation could take place; and to ſend out of the kingdom with inſult, the only man who could negotiate? Was it conſiſtent with a pacific intention, to declare with Mr. Pitt, on the 1ſt of February, "that you were "not at war with France," and yet requeſt of the States General, by Lord Auckland, on the 25th of January, "that they would take the moſt efficacious "meaſures to prevent the perſons who might render "themſelves guilty of ſo atrocious a crime *, from "finding any aſylum in their reſpective dóminions." "Some of theſe deteſted regicides were already in a "ſituation, *in which they may be ſubjected to the ſword "of the law?*" Yet theſe deteſted regicides were the men with whom you profeſſed a deſire of preſerving peace.

It is in vain to ſay you were not parties to this

* The King's death.

tranſaction:

tranſaction: you became *acceſſaries after the fact*, by not impeaching the miniſter who dared to hold ſuch language in the name of his nation; but this you refuſed to do: and by juſtifying the doer, you approved of the deed.

But were not theſe pretended or alledged grounds of war removed, firſt, even by the ſcandalous negotiation which you carried on with M. Chauvelin; and if not then, at all events, at a ſubſequent period of the war?

In note No. 6, which he delivered to Lord Grenville, the interference alluded to by the King's proclamation is moſt ſolemnly renounced by M. Chauvelin, in the name of his nation.

In note No. 13, there are theſe paſſages relative to the ſpecific cauſes of diſagreement. Firſt, as to the decree of the 19th of November, he ſays, "The "National Convention never meant that the French "republic ſhould favour inſurrections, ſhould eſpouſe "the quarrels of a few ſeditious perſons; or in a "word, ſhould endeavour to excite diſturbances in "any neutral or friendly power whatever. Such an "idea would be rejected by all the French. It "cannot be imputed to the National Convention "without doing it injuſtice. *This decree then is ap-* "*plicable only to thoſe people, who after having ac-* "*quired their liberty by conqueſt, may have demanded* "*the fraternity, the aſſiſtance of the republic, by the* "*ſolemn and unequivocal expreſſion of the general will.*"

This explanation was, however, deemed unſatisfactory. The Executive Council then ſpeaks itſelf, to remove the miſunderſtanding. " We have ſaid, and " we deſire to repeat it, that the decree of the 19th " of November could not have any application, un- " leſs to the *ſingle caſe*, in which the *general will* of a " nation clearly and unequivocally expreſſed, ſhould " call the French nation to its aſſiſtance and frater- " nity. Sedition can certainly never be conſtrued " into *the general will.* Theſe two ideas mutually " repel each other, ſince a ſedition is not, and can- " not be any other than the movement of a ſmall " number againſt the nation at large; and this move- " ment would ceaſe to be ſeditious, provided all the " members of a ſociety ſhould at once riſe, either to " correct their government, or to change it *in toto*, " or for any other object."

Now is or is not this diſtinction concluſive on the caſe of England, as it was deſcribed by Mr. Pitt himſelf. " As to the productions of another country, " he was ſure they would not be reliſhed, nor did he " believe they could have exiſtence, except by the " management *of a few factious perſons*; *the truth was*, " *theſe principles did not agree with ours*; *their natural* " *origin was not here, nor was there any thing to be* " *feared from them.*" Why then if the diſcontents are confined to a *few factious characters*, why quarrel with a decree, which expreſsly contemplates only the *general will:* whilſt it renounces ſedition; and

defines

defines ſedition to be the movement of a ſmall number againſt the *nation at large*.

But if this is not ſufficient to prove that this ground was removed before the war, did not the Convention afterwards ſolemnly revoke the decree both in ſpirit and ſubſtance?

As to the infringement of the rights of our allies, in note No. 13, it is ſaid, "That France ought "and will reſpect not only the independence of Eng- "land, but even that of thoſe of her allies, with "whom ſhe is not at war. The underſigned has "therefore been charged to declare formally, that "ſhe will not attack Holland, ſo long as that power, "on its ſide, confines itſelf within the bounds of a "ſtrict neutrality."

But at all events, ſurely theſe grounds were all done away, when you were poſſeſſed of the greateſt part of the French frontier, and conſequently had ſtripped her of all her conqueſts; particularly the Netherlands, and with them the river Scheldt.

So much for your conduct, gentlemen, in endeavouring "to maintain the bleſſings of peace; and neg- "lecting nothing that could contribute to that deſir- "able object."

Now let us look at your conduct, (for by ſupporting the government, you are a party to its acts) after you entered into the war.

I conceive, gentlemen, that when a man is about to fight, he generally likes to know what he fights for;

and will be heartier in the cauſe, when he does know, than when he is totally ignorant of the nature of his quarrel. I believe it is pretty much the ſame with nations. War is too evil and calamitous a principle, to be embraced by mankind, without ſtrong and dire neceſſity. The ſacrifices it exacts require ſome equivalent: or at leaſt it ſhould be proved to them that they do not throw away the bleſſings of peace. Therefore you were bound in policy to give the people of this country a ſpecific cauſe to fight for: to tell them why their purſes were emptied and their ſwords drawn. If ſo, it follows that the more intelligible the cauſe is, the more ſtrenuous will be the advocate. Have you acted wiſely or honeſtly in this reſpect. Both you cannot have done. For if you underſtood the cauſes of the war, why did you refuſe to make them known to the people? and if you did not, why did you go to war at all?

Now you had the following opportunities given you to ſpecify the objects of the war.

Firſt, Mr. Fox, February 18th, 1793, moved a ſtring of reſolutions tending to diſclaim particular grounds, as being the cauſes and objects of the war.—Why did you negative that motion? Next, Mr. Sheridan, April 25th, moved an addreſs on the ſubject of Lord Auckland's memorial, in order that by diſapproving it's contents the houſe might aſcertain "the intent, nature and purpoſe of the war." This was alſo negatived.

Mr.

Mr. Fox, June 17th, moved an addreſs for the purpoſe of ſpecifying the preciſe grounds for which we had engaged in, and ſtill continued, the conteſt.—Negatived:—And laſtly in his motion for peace, May 30th, 1794, the ſame attempt met the ſame fate.

So much for your conduct, in not rendering the war a war of the people, by ſuffering them to underſtand it's purpoſe. But the groſs inconſiſtencies of which you with the miniſter have been guilty, *in order to evade theſe motions*, have not only not raiſed an enthuſiaſm for the war, but rendered your motives ſuſpicious and the war unpopular and hateful. In 1792 you declared peace to be deſirable with France, but that war was to be apprehended from particular acts: yet you refuſed to negotiate with the miniſter of a Republic, the only mode by which peace could be obtained:—and afterwards to make peace when the pretended obſtacles were removed. In the beginning of the year 1793 you declared that you had thought it right "to abſtain from interference in the "internal affairs of France," that the war was "neither begun nor carried on by this country for the "purpoſe of interfering in the internal polity of "France, or of eſtabliſhing in that country any form "of government whatever, *an object therefore the attainment whereof was not eſſential towards the termination of the war.*" Yet in the year 1794 you ſay, July 10th, with Mr. Pitt, "that the avowed object

of

" of the war was none of thoſe which had been " aſcribed to miniſters, it was ſimply the deſtruc- " tion of the ſyſtem of jacobiniſm in France;" an " object which could not be heightened by new " grounds of ſucceſs, nor relinquiſhed from any " temporary failure in it's means of attainment, and " was one which he would never depart from, as ab- " ſolutely neceſſary to the ſecurity and preſervation " of this country." And who, having declared that this object, which at firſt was *no object at all*, was an object which was *never to be relinquiſhed*, entered into a negotiation for peace in 1796 and 1797 with the *very jacobins* whom you had ſo abuſed.

But it may be aſked what purpoſe equivocation and inconſiſtency could ſerve to the miniſter? It has ſerved the purpoſe of uniting in a common league, all parties who were from different motives diſpoſed to war. By ſtating his meaning in lofty but indefinite generalities, Mr. Pitt amuſed them all, by inducing each to imagine that his particular object was the leading feature of his policy. To the commercial men, it was "indemnity for the paſt and ſecurity for the future." To thoſe who favoured the war, through a mixture of alarm and ſelfiſhneſs, the deſtruction of the government of France was a "*means* of attaining other ends." Whilſt to Mr. Burke it was " the deſtruction of the ſyſtem of jacobiniſm" alone.

Let us now examine whether the conduct of the war

war was calculated to produce, or has obtained, the real or alledged ends of it.

And here give me leave to obſerve, that this review of hiſtory, ſo far from raiſing in the minds of Engliſhmen that ſentiment of exultation, and gratitude to Heaven, which we have been commanded to expreſs, by the magnificence of ſtate proceſſions, and the ſolemnities of religious rites, can only impreſs it with feelings of humiliation and deſpair. Or, if it is neceſſary that we obtrude our cauſe on the Almighty, it at leaſt ſhould be preſented by the ſpirit and voice of ſupplication, as a peace-offering of repentance. It is mocking his providence to contradict and gainſay the declarations which it has given of its indignation in thoſe judgments, with which, in every ſpecies of calamity and diſaſter, it has viſited this unhappy land. *Nec enim unquam atrocioribus populi Romani cladibus, magiſve juſtis judiciis approbatum eſt, non eſſe curæ deis ſecuritatem noſtram, eſſe* ULTIONEM.

Firſt then I will ſuppoſe, that Mr. Pitt had nothing in view but the declared objects of the war. Let us take each of theſe in its date, and compare it with the train of meaſures undertaken for its accompliſhment. I ſhall begin from the period at which we joined the confederacy againſt France.

Here then it is to be remembered, that we were entering on an enterprize, in which we were not the firſt adventurers; we joined others as companions of their way, a part of which we only propoſed

to

to travel, but by a common mode of conveyance. A project generally derives its complexion from the characters by whom it is deſigned; at leaſt men ſo often perſonify the opinions they eſpouſe, in the eye of the world, as to render it neceſſary for us to exerciſe a little philoſophy when we would ſeparate the actor and the act. Therefore in this inſtance, it was of ſome moment to know, with whoſe party and purpoſes we had aſſociated ourſelves; ſince "evil "communication corrupts good manners;" and (whether owing to this principle, I know not,) but certain it is, that we had our original purpoſes and profeſſions ſtrangely ſtolen from us by the way, which we have never ſince had the good fortune to recover.

Now when the King of Pruſſia and the Emperor of Germany declared war againſt France, there were, I believe, ſome ſuſpicions entertained as to the diſintereſtedneſs of their views, and the ſincerity of their profeſſions. They had, it is true, publiſhed a manifeſto, or rather homily, full of morality, peace and moderation: declaring that they took up arms "to preſerve the happineſs and order of the ſocial world." Like true knights errant, they ſallied forth, to redreſs wrongs, heal diſſentions, ſuccour the diſtreſſed, reſcue civil ſociety from the fangs of thoſe republican monſters, by whom it was infeſted; in ſhort to bring down *Aſtrea* herſelf once more to the habitations of men. But as nothing can do juſtice to this "noble performance" but its own terms, let it ſpeak for itſelf.

ſelf. " This manifeſto was publiſhed to lay open to " the preſent generation, as well as to poſterity, " their motives, their deſigns, and the diſintereſtedneſs " of their perſonal views; taking up arms for " the purpoſe of preſerving ſocial order amongſt " all civilized nations, and to ſecure to each ſtate, " its religion, happineſs, independence, territories, " and real conſtitution. On this ground, they " hoped that all empires and all ſtates ought to " be unanimous; and becoming the firm guardians " of the happineſs of mankind, that they cannot fail " to unite their efforts to reſcue a numerous nation " from its own fury, and to preſerve Europe from " the return of barbariſm, and the univerſe from the " ſubverſion and anarchy with which it was threat- " ened."

Who would not have armed in ſuch a cauſe; who would not have ſubſcribed to a manifeſto, which breathes the pious zeal of a Godfrey, and the generous policy of a Naſſau? Or rather who is there, ſo loſt to ſenſe and virtue, as not to reprobate the ſtale hypocriſy of a declaration, whoſe authors had exhibited ſo recent a ſpecimen of their regard for religious faith, for the independence and true conſtitution of other countries, when they tore from unhappy Poland her liberty, her conſtitution, and exiſtence as a nation? " The whole of this noble performance," Mr. Burke ſays, " ſhould be read at the firſt con- " greſs that is held for the general pacification of Eu-

" rope." And ſo it ſhould, that it may remind the high contracting parties, that they are *an alliance of ſovereign princes*, aſſembled to reſtore peace to a bleeding world, and not a *gang of thieves collected to divide a ſpoil.*

Indeed it is doubtful to this day whether the retreat of the Duke of Brunſwick from Champagne was more owing to the abhorrence in which his ſovereign maſters and their profeſſions were held, or to their own tricking policy and double dealing.

However, England joined the confederacy with at leaſt the profeſſion of *other views and motives* in her mouth, than an interference with the Jacobinical Government. According to her quarrel, therefore, the cauſe of the emigrants was expreſsly laid out of the queſtion: it was a queſtion of French and Engliſh politics, not an eſpouſal of one party of the French nation againſt the other—According to our own original ſtatements, it was a war " purely collateral to " the ſtate of Jacobiniſm, and as much a foreign war " to us and all our home concerns, as the war with " Spain, 1740, about the *Garda Coſtas*, the Madrid " Convention, or the fable of Captain Jenkins's " ears." When, therefore, the emigrants had experienced the treatment which they had met with, and the myſterious conduct that had been obſerved by Auſtria and Pruſſia in Champagne; and when they read your reaſons for war in your diplomatic correſpondence, and ſenatorial debates; could it be expect-

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ed that they would co-operate heartily with you, or attempt a ſerious movement in France under ſuch auſpices? But to crown the whole, the Prince of Saxe Cobourg iſſued a proclamation upon Dumourier's deſertion, inviting the French nation to rally round the conſtitution of 1789; and when he found that Dumourier had not as many ſympathiſers in treaſon as he expected, he revoked this declaration, and ſeized on Condé and Valenciennes, *in the name and right of his Majeſty the Emperor.*

What could you expect from ſuch weak and perfidious conduct? Such was the diſguſt and dread excited againſt you in the French nation, that under the moſt cruel tyranny which the world ever ſaw, they flew to arms, and buried in their reſolution not to be conquered, all memory of having been oppreſſed!

So that at the cloſe of the campaign of 1793, you were nearly in point of local ſituation, where the Duke of Brunſwick was previous to his retreat from France. But with this difference; that then the emigrants were with you, the royaliſts in France were with you; your reſources were entire; your armies compleat--whilſt France was a divided people, without armies and without money to oppoſe you;—and now when you had ſpent millions, and ſacrificed thouſands of lives, the French had united her people, armed and diſciplined the population of the country, and ſucceeded, by the terrible energy of a revolutionary

ary Government, in bringing into action the collective capital of the nation.

To this ſucceſs *you* had principally contributed—for if you had been ſincere in your alledged grounds of complaint and war, it is evident that you would have ſought for peace when theſe objects were attained: but ſo far from this, when Holland was free from danger, the decree of the 19th of November repealed, and the French power crippled by the ſucceſs of the allies, when conſequently your pretended objects of war were obtained, inſtead of ſeeking peace, you take a freſh ground of hoſtility, and now contend for "*indemnity for the paſt and ſecurity for the future.*"

Thus then a ſuſpicion, fatal to *their* views, was caſt on *the coaleſced powers*, from the nature of *your objects* in the war, inaſmuch as they were diſtinct from, nay according to your language, oppoſed to, a reſtoration of the antient Government of France. And from your co-operation with a party who *profeſſed to interfere in her internal affairs*, you in your turn became juſtly an object of ſuſpicion. Thus whilſt your contrary principles of action weakened the general effect of the arms of the allies; the French Government was enabled to ſay of *you* in particular, to her own people: 'ſee what is the pretended ſincerity of the Engliſh Go-'vernment, ſhe diſclaims interference in our domeſtic 'affairs, yet ſhe joins a party whoſe avowed object it is

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'to interfere; ſhe goes to war on one ground, and 'no ſooner is that removed, and an opportunity of-'fered her of proving the ſincerity of her declarations, 'than ſhe takes another ground; judge you then 'whether it is to your own or the Engliſh Government 'that you owe the evils of war; the one has always 'ſought peace on one plain and uniform principle, 'the other has enlarged her pretenſions, and changed 'her ground with every turn of good fortune.'

Such had been the ſucceſs and tendency of your conduct down to the cloſe of the year 1793, that the revolutionary ſentiment was ſtrengthened in the hearts of Frenchmen, and views of future aggrandizement rendered more diſtinct and ſanguine in the minds of their rulers.

At length you avowed, that "the deſtruction of the Jacobin ſyſtem was the object of the war," and the *ſine qua non* of pacification. But your general treatment of the Royaliſt party, your declaration that their cauſe was only an inſtrument to obtain other ends, and your treachery at Toulon, had alienated them from your intereſt. You had told them before, that an interference in their internal affairs was only a *means to anſwer other purpoſes*. What purpoſes? why to obtain "indemnity for the paſt and ſecurity for the future." What indemnity could you expect? Not money, for that you denied that ſhe poſſeſſed, in all your reaſonings on the finances of France; but ſhe

ſhe had colonial poſſeſſions, and they had from the beginning dazzled the eye of your ambition. What ſecurity? The annihilation of French power and independence, when ſhe was portioned out, and garriſoned by your allies; that was your ſecurity: yes, you fought *in her plunder for your indemnity, and for your ſecurity in her ruin!* In the ſincerity of my heart I rejoice, when I look back on the whole of this deteſtable plot, engendered in that mind, that is bloated with arrogant projects, that the over-ruling providence has made the violation of its laws, and the profanation of its name, its own peculiar avengement—that it has withered the arm of human ſtrength, and confounded thoſe impious politics, whoſe triumph muſt have been built on the overthrow of man's independence, on the fall of his liberty and reaſon.

And how did you accredit the declaration of Downing Street? You not only did not give the Emigrants, the place, which the firſt party to your new cauſe was entitled to, but you did not in misfortune incurred on your behalf, ſhew them a decent conſideration. Inſtead of protecting that unhappy body of men, on your retreat in 1794, you every where left them to defend places which you knew could not be maintained; and which on their ſurrender muſt expoſe theſe betrayed wretches to certain deſtruction. It will be reſerved to the pen of indignant hiſtory, when the motives of men, and the events

events of meaſures ſhall be more clearly developed, to do juſtice to the foul proceedings of the Allies. —To hold up to deſerved deteſtation the whole conſpiracy of thoſe iniquitous politicians, by whom, thoſe brave but unfortunate gentlemen, who in exile had nothing left them but their ſwords and their principles, were coldly and cruelly ſacrificed to ſelfiſh ends, to falſe pretences, and to wicked, becauſe chimerical experiments. But why ſhould we be ſo romantic as to complain that the loſs of honour, and the effuſion of human blood, do not diſturb the complacent calculations of cabinets and ſtateſmen!

What a contemptible figure therefore did our councils now make in the eyes of Europe! Exactly as the train of events gradually rendered it more and more impracticable to accompliſh the overthrow of the French government, in that proportion you bound yourſelves incontinently to purſue it. In the beginning of 1793 it was at leaſt a feaſible project. Then you renounced it altogether. In the courſe of the campaign it became more difficult; you were then ſuſpected of having it in view. It ſoon grew to be a forlorn hope; then you declared it to be a deſirable *means* of accompliſhing your original end. And at length when it was hopeleſs; you avowed, that you would not lay down your arms until it was accompliſhed. Yet ſtrange to tell, ſo much is inconſiſtency your

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fate, that you have been compelled to withdraw your haughty pledge, to unſay your arrogant declaration, and to ſue for peace to the agents and ſyſtem of jacobiniſm!* to have your overtures and your ambaſſador treated with contempt and inſult; and to hear the very language from the mouth of your enemy that ſo lately was in your own. For the *delenda Carthago* once ſo familiar to Engliſh tongues, is now tranſlated into the French language.

For now the French in their turn declare, that they will not make peace with your government. The war has therefore become (dreadful to ſay) literally a war of extermination. It becomes you then to examine into the ſtate of your remaining power, and compare it with the reſources and condition of the enemy. It would be as uſeleſs as criminal to palliate and conceal misfortune. We muſt confeſs with Mr. Burke, that the Jacobins "have ſeen the thing right "from the beginning." For whilſt you have failed in almoſt every inſtance, they have ſucceeded even in thoſe romantic projects of aggrandizement, which were at firſt attributed to them by very few indeed. You went to war with them to defend an ally; he has been conquered, and become an ally of France:—to protect the rights of neutral nations; and there is

* Out of the eight Directors with whom you have negotiated, four voted for the death of the King, viz. Barras, Carnot, Reveillere, Lépaux, Merlin of Douay.

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ſcarce a power in Europe that has not been compelled to declare war againſt you;—to defend religion, and half Europe is ſecularized;—to ſecure property, and Italy, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Spain, have been laid under contribution;—to prevent their plans of aggrandizement, and they have changed places with you in the ſcale of alliances; whilſt they have ſubjected the Netherlands, Holland, Italy, Spain, and part of Germany to their power. To check the ſpread of revolutionary ſentiment, and the evil which before the war was confined to correſpondences between the clubs of London and Paris, is now eſtabliſhed by a *balance of republican intereſt*, connected with a *balance of power*, that outweighs the reſt of monarchical and ariſtocratical Europe.

To compenſate theſe loſſes, you have at an enormous expence of blood and treaſure obtained the miniſter's favourite foreign object, an acceſſion of colonial territory, and an advantage in the balance of trade. But let any man, that reflects on the principle of European colonization, caſt his eye on the price which the maintenance of the Weſt Indies alone has coſt this country, in the courſe of the preſent century; let him recollect, that our conqueſts there and elſewhere, are ſtill in the contemplation, and ſubject to the contingencies of a future negotiation for peace; let him look too at the line of coaſt, and the immenſe foundation for a future maritime power, which France poſſeſſes *abſolutely*; and then determine on the value

of theſe conſiderations. In addition, however, to this object, we have added to our former naval renown, by the moſt ſplendid victories. Certainly we have; and every Engliſhman ought to contemplate with pride, the naval triumphs of his country. But ſtill theſe ſucceſſes, for which his Majeſty and all the ſtate have been pleaſed to exhibit a grand ſpectacle to the city of London, remind me, under the preſent circumſtances of the country, of the old ſtory of the giant and the dwarf. They both gained the victory, it is true, but the giant only enjoyed it: for the poor dwarf had ſuffered ſo much in the conteſt, that when it was over, he died. So I fear it will prove with the people of this country: they gain a great deal of honour, but in the mean time they are ruined and ſtarved.

As this is a war of the governments, it is deſirable to oppoſe France with an oppoſite principle and party. But where can you look for them now? Where are the inſurgents of Toulon, of Marſeilles, of Lyons? Where the Chriſtian army of La Vendée, its leaders and chiefs? Where is that Charette, whom a confidence in you betrayed to an ignominious end, who in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, poured out curſes on your government, with his dying breath? Where is the gallant, the ill-fated, Sombrieul? But that is a tale that ſhould dye the Britiſh cheek with eternal ſhame: whilſt in the royaliſt party, it has converted confidence into diſtruſt, and gratitude into hatred

hatred and revenge; deceived ſo often, they will truſt their betrayers no more.

To foreign aids you can look no longer; your allies are every where become your ſecret or open enemies. Such has been the nature and the reſult of the miniſter's miſerable and wicked policy, *that he has done for France exactly that, which you went to war with her for having deſigned and imagined.* There never was ſo great a Jacobin, or at leaſt ſo great a friend to the Jacobins, in conduct, as Mr. Pitt. He has been an inſtrument in their hands, to effect their purpoſes, whilſt by his intentions and motives, he has raiſed in them an implacable ſpirit of hatred and revenge againſt himſelf and the country. Yet this is the man who calls as loudly and arrogantly for confidence, who challenges enquiry as boldly into his conduct, and appeals to events, now that they have proved one tiſſue of diſaſters and diſgraces, with as much unbluſhing impudence, as he did, when he ſwayed the deſtinies of Europe, and made the French republic tremble for her exiſtence. There is not one object of the war gained by him; yet there never was ſuch a power of inſtrument and means committed to the hands of a European governor!—There is no inſtance of failure both in deſign, and in execution, of which he has not been convicted; there is no calamity which he has not inflicted on his country; and yet he obſtinately holds the reins of office, with the ſame lofty tone of preſumption, and the ſame hardi-

hood of reſolve, as ever ; and ſtill at the annual opening of his *Pandora's* box, entertains the *repreſentatives of the people* with a long and eloquent romance on the proſperous ſtate of the country.

" *Populus me ſibilat, ſed mihi plaudo,*" is indeed his motto and maxim.

But to you, who pledged your lives and fortunes, for the maintenance of this war, I beg leave to addreſs a few conſiderations, that I think if rightly underſtood, and if attended to in time, will awaken you to the ſtate of danger, into which this magician of the ſtate has lulled you by his plauſible, but deceitful eloquence. Gentlemen, there is all the need in the world, for you now to come forward with the ſtake of your *lives and fortunes*. *You had better riſk the whole than loſe it*. And if you continue to ſleep on as now you do, a time will come, when you will be arouſed by a ſtorm, that will ſweep away your " lives and your fortunes."

I have hitherto adverted to the folly or the hypocriſy of which you have been guilty in your motives for entering into the war ; to the actual reſults of it's management, as it affects your external intereſt ; and to the proof which this hiſtory affords, of the wickedneſs, the incapacity, and ruinous perſeverance of the Miniſter.

But important as theſe conſiderations doubtleſs would have been at another time, they are reduced to " parochial inſignificance" compared with the

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more preſſing and alarming dangers of the day. It has been ſaid that the ſigns of the times are viſible to common eyes, when Empires totter and nations verge to decay. Is not the writing on the wall againſt us? Have we not reaſon for alarm, not only on account of the ambition of an enemy, but the full maturity of thoſe ſeeds of deſtruction, which, with parricidal hands, the ſons of England have ſown in the heart of their country?

Firſt we are to reſiſt France—She declares ſhe will not make peace with your government, in 1797—You declared that you would not lay down your arms until you had deſtroyed her's in 1793. So much for the *lex talionis*. Each government is quite mad and wicked enough. On what ground did you found your hopes of ſucceſs; on what ground do they found theirs? You hoped it from the internal diſturbances and diſſenſions by which ſhe was diſtracted, in conſequence of the oppreſſions and miſeries ſhe ſuffered from her government; and from the ruin of her finances, which you conceived to be the "nerves and ſinews of war."—She *preciſely hopes the ſame effects from the ſame cauſes*. Your expectations have been diſappointed. Is there ſuch an analogy between the caſe of France in 1793, and of England in 1797, as to give us good ground to hope, that France will meet the ſame fate?

Why did your hopes fail?—From two cauſes.

1st. A miſcalculation of her means and reſources; and,

and, 2dly. An ignorance of the ſtate of the public opinion.

1st. You miſcalculated her means and reſources. It was not only in this country but throughout Europe the faſhion, both before and after the war, to propheſy the deſtruction of the French finances, and to ridicule as abſurd and impolitic their ſcheme of paper currency. On the contrary, however, amongſt the diſcoveries which time will make, and the prejudices that experience will remove, one of the firſt in political affairs, will be perhaps this error on the nature and policy of the *aſſignats* of France. So far from it's having been a poor expedient and inefficient contrivance, that could ſerve the purpoſe of the government for a little time only: it appears to me to have been one of the profoundeſt ſtrokes of policy, as well as one of the moſt ſucceſsful engines, to obtain and ſecure power, that has been invented by man. Its authors ſeem purpoſely to have given to it ſo much *appearance of analogy in it's principle, to the principle of the funding ſyſtem, or of general paper credit*, as to deceive the reſt of Europe into an opinion that it's ſucceſs, nature, and effects might be appreciated on the ſame grounds, and by the ſame criterion, viz. it's relation to the value of money, or other repreſentative ſigns of property. And that, therefore, in proportion as it was depreciated or roſe in value, according to that teſt, it was nearer or further from extinction. Now why was this reaſoning falſe? Becauſe

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it went on the ſuppoſition, that only a certain quantity of aſſignats were iſſued; and then it muſt follow, that if fifty thouſand at a certain rate of value, are neceſſary as a circulating medium, when theſe by depreciation become worth no more than 25,000, they are by the proportion of one half unequal to the purpoſes of circulation. But what was the fact? The French did not limit their iſſues, by any other rule than the rate of the aſſignat; therefore, if by depreciation to day, fifty aſſignats are only worth as much as one was yeſterday, and to-morrow a thouſand ſhall be only worth fifty; they had nothing to do but to *make up in quantity what they loſt in value*, and multiply them fifty, a thouſand, or an hundred thouſand times if neceſſary: therefore, whilſt the aſſignat was *worth any thing*, it was the ſame to them, as long as they had paper and ink, whether it was worth a *livre* or a *louis d'or*. At length the aſſignats were worth nothing: what then? Did the government fall? No ſuch thing: it never was ſo ſtrong and flouriſhing as at the preſent moment. But ſtill the aſſignats would not ſerve to pay the armies, or purchaſe the foreign commodities, of which, from the ſtate of their country, the French ſtood in need. What reſource had they in this caſe? *Bullion*. It is well known, that at the time when you both in and out of Parliament, were expecting to hear by every mail, of the ruin of her finances—that the French treaſury was overflowing with *ſpecie*. According to M. Calonne's account,

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(a man who from his fortunes and opinions is not likely to exaggerate the ſtrength of the Republic) ſhe had, either ſecreted, in circulation, or in the hands of the government 120,000,000l. ſterling of ſpecie. "Thus" ſays he, "Becauſe the dreadful extortions, and a "monſtrous profuſion of paper money made the "*ſpecie* diſappear, we conclude that there is none re- "maining in the kingdom; though it is evident that "of *one hundred and twenty millions ſterling* in gold and "ſilver *ſpecie*, that exiſted before the revolution, ſup- "poſing that there were forty millions exported either "by the emigrants or for the purpoſe of purchaſing "foreign commodities, or for the purpoſe of bribery; "and even without reckoning what has been obtain- "ed by the forced contributions of the conquered "countries—Yet even on this ſuppoſition, there muſt "remain in France about *eighty millions ſterling in* "*ſpecie*. We do not include in this calculation all "the plate and precious ornaments poſſeſſed by ſo "many individuals, and by fifty-two thouſand "churches or convents, which cannot be valued with "preciſion, but which muſt have been very con- "ſiderable. Whatever has been coined ſince the "revolution muſt likewiſe be added to it; and "every thing conſidered, it cannot be queſtioned, "that by reducing to eighty millions ſterling, all the "gold and ſilver of every denomination, coined or "not, now exiſting in France, we are rather below "than above the real ſum. Such a ſum would cer-

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" tainly be ſufficient for France, ſince in England it is " reckoned that thirty-five millions only are in cir- " culation."

What immenſe power then muſt have reſulted from this ſcheme to the rulers of the day, ſince by ſupplying, and forcing on the country, a new circulating medium, they were enabled to reſerve whatever part of this capital remained, and a large part it muſt have been, for the external exigencies of the State. By this ſhe has maintained her armies—by this ſhe has obtained the neceſſary commodities of foreign countries; and by this, on the event of a peace, ſhe may be enabled to re-eſtabliſh the ſyſtem of her internal induſtry to an extent, and on principles of which we are little aware.

You have then clearly been erroneous in *your* calculations on her finances—Are *her* ideas of the ſtate of yours equally unfounded.

What is their ſtate? The national Debt of England amounts nearly to the enormous ſum of 400,000,000; to pay the intereſt of which 15,000,000, muſt be yearly deducted from the productive induſtry of the country.—I ſhall not enter into the queſtion of the advantage or diſadvantage of a national debt, although I conceive it has been proved to demonſtration by Dr. Smith, that it is the cauſe of the high price of proviſions according to the vulgar notion, or to ſpeak more correctly, of the depreciation of the value of *ſpecie*: and conſequently that it has in that proportion diminiſhed the value of your capital, or in

fact abſorbed ſo much of it. But be that as it may, you are now reduced to ſuch a ſtate as to your funding ſyſtem, that you *dare* not draw on it for your ſupplies any longer; ſince ſtocks which were at 96 in 1789, are now at 49 and a fraction; you are therefore compelled to exact 7,000,000 more within the year, *if you can raiſe it*, by the new mode of tripling the aſſeſſed taxes. Which added to the intereſt of the public debt amounts to the ſum of 22,000,000.* —The whole ſuppoſed capital in *ſpecie* in this country amounts to 35,000,000. So that only 13,000,000 are not drawn into the channels of taxation. It will here perhaps be ſaid, but France according to your own arguments, has been able to ſurvive a greater paper currency, and a more enormous public expenditure. And upon this *nominal* compariſon have all the falſe calculations of miniſters on the ſtate of the finances of the two countries been built. You confounded the *nominal* with the *relative* value of the aſſignat. " And thence " inferred, that the expences of France in one month " are greater than thoſe of England for one year; " and that the expences of the French for one year " ſurpaſs the whole national debt of England." So ſay my Lords Mornington and Auckland; what ſays truth? Why certainly that as from the former ſtatement of the depreciation of the aſſignats,

* The intereſt of the Loan of 12,000,000, is not here included. That muſt be alſo added to make the account of our finances compleat.

the

" the 30,000 millions or 1,200 millions ſterling, " expended by France, ſince the beginning of the " revolution, repreſent now, but 150,000,000 of " *ſpecie*, or ſix millions ſterling, it follows that the " four campaigns, &c. have not coſt France the fourth " part of what England expends in one year of the " war?"—There is therefore no analogy, (or if any it is, according to the reaſoners againſt the aſſignats, againſt us) between the ſtate of our finances now, and thoſe of France at any period of her paper circulation. There is none moreover, from their oppoſite natures, for their paper currency proceeded on the principle of ſupplying the deficiency of value by quantity, ours proceeds on the principle of ſupplying the deficiency of quantity, by the excellence of public credit. The moment therefore this bulwark is broken in on, the ſyſtem of the Engliſh funds will tumble to the ground: and it is no exaggeration to ſay, great *for many reaſons* will be the fall thereof.

Our hopes of a counter-revolution alſo failed becauſe you were ignorant of the ſtate of the public opinion, or at leaſt did not know the effects of revolutionary ſentiment when organized and in a ſtate of practice. Firſt you reaſoned, as if it was natural for a people to reſiſt or to revolt from the oppreſſions of a new, as readily as of an old government. Now mankind are naturally prone to novelty and change: the French had then undergone the moſt cruel oppreſſion from the old *regime*, and therefore the oppreſſion of the new had not the effect on

their minds and habits, that it would have had on a people familiarized to a ſtate of liberty and ſocial comfort. They, in the next place, had experienced the ſtability of the old deſpotiſm; and from the nature of the new, as being a ſtate of anarchy, they might reaſonably hope that it would not long continue. Beſides, they ſaw that the exiſtence of the new order of things was identified with their national independence. For your conduct, and that of your allies, had taught them what to expect on the event of a counter-revolution. Your hopes again were diſappointed, becauſe you judged of the means of a revolutionary, by the criterions and teſts of regular governments. In the regular governments of Europe, *the ſocial effort has been a collection of individual efforts, bottomed on individual or ſelfiſh motives: in France, all individuality has been loſt ſight of, in the ſingleneſs and generality of the public movement.* "When "I contemplate, ſays Mr. Burke, the ſcheme on "which France is formed, and when I compare "it with theſe ſyſtems with which it is, and ever muſt "be in conflict, thoſe things which ſeem as defects "in her polity, are the very things which make me "tremble. The ſtates of the Chriſtian world have "grown up to their preſent magnitude in a great ſpace "of time, and by a great variety of accidents. They "have been improved to what we ſee them, with "greater or leſs degrees of felicity and ſkill. Not "one of them has been formed upon a regular plan,

"or

" or with any unity of deſign. As their conſtitutions " are not ſyſtematical, they have not been directed " to any *peculiar* end, eminently diſtinguiſhed, and " ſuperſeding every other. The objects which they " embrace, are of the greateſt poſſible variety, and " have become in a manner infinite. In all theſe old " countries, the *ſtate has been made to the people, and* " *not the people conformed to the ſtate.* Every ſtate has " purſued, not only every ſort of ſocial advantage, " but it has cultivated the welfare of every indivi- " dual. This comprehenſive ſcheme, virtually pro- " duced a degree of perſonal liberty in forms the " moſt adverſe to it. That liberty was found in mo- " narchies the moſt abſolute, in a degree unknown to " the antient commonwealths. From hence the power " of all our modern ſtates meet, in their movements, " with ſome obſtruction. It is therefore no wonder, " *that when theſe ſtates are to be conſidered as machines* " *to operate for ſome one great end, that this diſſipated and* " *balanced force is not eaſily concentered, or made to bear* " *with the whole nation, upon one point, &c.*"

" But in France the will, the wiſh, the want, the " liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals is nothing. " Individuality is left out of their ſcheme of govern- " ment. The ſtate is all in all. Every thing is re- " ferred to the production of force; afterwards every " thing is truſted to the uſe of it. It is military in its " principle, in its maxims, in its ſpirit, and in all its " movements." Such then as has been ably deſcribed by

by Mr. Burke, is the genius of a revolutionary government.

The ſame means of reſiſtance you clearly have not, becauſe you want the leading principle of this energy. " For "ſays Mr. Burke," the Britiſh Senate is with out " queſtion, that which purſues the greateſt variety of " ends, and is the leaſt diſpoſed to ſacrifice any one " of them to another or to the whole. It aims at " taking in the entire circle of human deſires, and " ſecuring for them their fair enjoyment. Our legiſ- " lature has been ever cloſely connected it its moſt " efficient part with *individual* feeling, and *individual* " intereſt, &c. On this principle, therefore, England " would be the weakeſt power of the whole ſyſtem."

But you have alſo made a falſe eſtimate of the powers which this principle of unity and indiviſibility could call into action; and they are ſuch as a State founded on the ſame relations as thoſe of the Engliſh State, cannot command and employ. We never conſidered the power of a State, which was able and daring enough to lay hold on the phyſical reſources of the country, who has ſeized on nature itſelf.— " She had her territorial productions for her own ſub- " ſiſtence, her men to recruit her armies, her wool " to furniſh them with cloathing, her iron to ſupply " her youth with arms, her horſes to remount her " cavalry, and her fanaticiſm to give a new elaſtic " ſpring to her courage."*—And theſe ſhe accord-

* Calonne's Political State of Europe.

ingly

ingly ſeized on, on the *totality* of them. But your efforts, from the controul of your political and ſocial habitudes, muſt be the reſult of partial diſpoſitions and individual contributions; therefore, in reſpect to *means*, there is no analogy between you and revolutionary France. You have, if you pleaſe, *money* and *art*—they had *arms* and *men*.

I have before ſaid that you failed from a miſconception of the ſtate and motives of her public ſentiment; but, I did not then ſhew why there was not an analogy ſufficiently ſtrong between the caſes of the two countries in this reſpect, for it to prove concluſively, that ſhe would *therefore* be equally diſappointed. I did not then diſcuſs this part of my ſubject, becauſe as it is the moſt material of our many important domeſtic conſiderations, I wiſhed to reſerve it to the concluſion of my addreſs to you, that it may be impreſſed on your minds as ſtrongly, as the ſlender talents of the writer will enable him to enforce it. For it is indeed the moſt ſerious ſubject of concern to all men who love the country and covet peace, but to you, it is no leſs an object than your *ſocial exiſtence*.

In turning my eyes therefore to the internal intereſts of the country, a view of them may be taken under two points, the *government* and the *governed*. For this in every country muſt be the ſum of it's ſocial relations. When, therefore, I ſee my country placed in the alarming ſituation in which it now ſtands, I could have wiſhed that the foundation and

principle

principle of thoſe relations had been ſound and entire. That the conſtitution of which we boaſt ſo much, and in many reſpects ſo juſtly, had been in all its parts, deſerving the proud and enviable diſtinction which it has acquired, viz. the envy and admiration of the world. That in this age of theories and experiments in civil government, the model of Engliſh liberty, if it was leſs daring and brilliant than others, might yet obtain the applauſe and preference of the judgment, from the more ſedate but valuable qualities of rational liberty and ſubſtantial uſefulneſs. That the writings of Monteſquieu and De Lolme would be no longer read as the ingenious diſquiſitions of learned men, but that the experiments of an enlightened age would add the *fiat* of experience to the ſanctions of philoſophy and ſpeculation. I did hope, that if the government reſted on it's legitimate foundation, if it's adminiſtration was directed to the happineſs of the people, the people on their part would by a character and conduct worthy the genius of a free nation, have diſplayed the eager and virtuous enthuſiaſm which they ought to feel for ſuch a bleſſing, and would have treated with indignation and contempt, the menace of an enemy to overthrow it by foreign force, and with juſt and condign puniſhment, the attempts of domeſtic traitors, whether in or out of office, to corrupt it's principles and change it's nature. But it ſeems in this country, that to expreſs a virtuous regard for the public weal, a love of liberty, and a

ſincere

ſincere conviction that public and private duties can form but one code of morals, is a romantic and puerile enthuſiaſm. It is ſuited indeed to the imagination of a ſchool boy, warm from the peruſal of antient ſtory, filled with examples of antient patriotiſm, and with maxims and images of antient freedom: but it argues a want of *knowledge of the world*, of men and manners, of obſervation and experience, to indulge in theſe ſcholaſtic reveries, to carry them forward with you into real life, or to dream that their lofty illuſions are conſiſtent with the capacities and condition of man. If it is ſo, I muſt be content to abide the cenſure of the world. For never can I ſo far forget thoſe ſacred leſſons of virtue which my early youth imbibed from the oracles of the antient world, thoſe recitals of great exploit and heroic ſuffering, in defence of freedom; and the whole ſyſtem of thought and action, which was founded on the principle of a delightful and expanded benevolence, as to deride and deny their value. To thoſe ſtores of memory I turn my mind, when it is ſick with the contemplation of human miſery and crime: not that it may forget itſelf or human nature; but that it may be ſtimulated to virtuous exertion, and be conſoled for the degradation of man, as he is, by contemplating the picture of what he has been, and the hope of what he may be.

But theſe ideas are not romantic; the providence which governs the affairs of men, has wiſely and benevolently decreed, that its laws ſhould be the paths of happineſs. It has erected, even here, an

awful principle of moral retribution, that acts as unerringly on the affairs of ſtates, as on the actions of private men. And never has it or will it ſuffer a violation of the principles of juſtice and virtue, to be a means of permanent proſperity to either one or the other. True greatneſs therefore, and indeed laſting ſafety, muſt be looked for, from an adherence to the principles of juſtice. Does the ſtate of theſe kingdoms, of its government and people, warrant us in hoping that we have a right to expect either greatneſs or ſafety? Has the former acted the part of ſo faithful a guardian of the welfare of the latter, that in danger and diſtreſs it ſhould conceive itſelf entitled to a return of ſupport and protection? Has it, as it ought to have been, proved the nurſe and not the deſtroyer of public virtue? For it is an eternal truth, that the government of every country is the cauſe of the moral and political habitudes of the people. The invariable teſtimony of hiſtory proves that thoſe countries which have been bleſſed with pure and juſt ſyſtems of political inſtitution, have been diſtinguiſhed by a correſponding ſpirit and character in the people. For in free governments, the public mind is early imbued with the invigorating motive of public ſpirit, and diſciplined in the ſchool of generous and elevated principle; it is taught to cheriſh as an inſtinct an intereſt in the public welfare; to conſider as the higheſt deſtination of human effort, ſituations of public truſt and power; to look

with

with reverence to the virtuous examples of the dead, and with emulation to thoſe of the living. Thus then patriotiſm becomes the ruling paſſion of ſuch a nation; becauſe an exerciſe of its duties is the only path to diſtinction, or happineſs; for in a ſociety which is governed by ſuch a mode of public opinion, the cenſorial power that is generated by it, makes ſelfiſhneſs and vice too painful puniſhments for them to have many votaries: and government therefore if it is good, will neceſſarily produce a general obſervance of the laws of morality. "As well might we "fancy that of itſelf the ſea will ſwell, and that "without the winds, the billows will inſult the "adverſe ſhore, as that the groſs of the people will be "moved and elevated and continue by a ſteady and "permanent direction to bear on one point, without "the influence of ſuperior authority of ſuperior "mind."

I am ſure then, that if this doctrine be juſt, if the temper and habits of a people are derived from their government, the aſpect of Engliſh ſociety is not very favourable to the credit of Engliſh government. You who have ſo long complained of the corruption of the people, who have ſo long reiterated it as an argument againſt reforms that have been propoſed by wiſer and better men than yourſelves, take ſhame for having been the authors of that corruption. As well might the aſſaſſin deride the efforts which were made to heal the wounds that he had inflicted, becauſe

they were desperate, as you persecute and revile those who would reform the government, because the people are corrupt.

It is indeed, a melancholy truth, that the people are corrupt, that the people are indifferent to what concerns their nearest interest; that the moral sense is as dead in them, as the springs of social action are relaxed and debilitated. But you, who once valued yourselves on this acquiescence, who construed it into the popularity of your measures; who praised the good sense, and sober character of Englishmen, who ridiculed and persecuted those who (though perhaps mistaken) complained of and endeavoured to stimulate their torpor, do you now acknowledge the justice of these complaints. The people are longer called on by the London Corresponding Society to assert their liberties: they are no longer tempted to acts of sedition by inflammatory hand-bills; but they are called on by the voice of their rulers, of the government, of the titled and propertied orders of the community. And still the people are "like the deaf adder, that "hears not the voice of the charmer, charm he ne-"ver so wisely." This is undoubtedly to be deplored; but is not to be wondered at: look at the history of the administration of this government for the last century; look to its progress, more particularly for the last six years, and you will be no longer at a loss for the solution of this ænigma.

How has the administration of the government affected

fected public happineſs, for that is its end and criterion, ſince the revolution of 1688? Public happineſs, may not perhaps, be improperly ſaid to conſiſt of two things: Liberty and Security. The great means by which the liberty of this country ſeems to me to have been affected, has been from the conſequences that have reſulted from the enormous influence of your public debt. It has, I conceive, produced two effects: its intereſt, which is the revenue of the country, from its mode of collection and diſpoſition, has enabled the miniſter of the day to acquire ſuch an aſcendancy over the legiſlature, as to ſubject the conſtitution to his controul: and, in this reſpect, each ſucceeding miniſter has been more ſucceſsful than his predeceſſor, from the increaſe of his means. And in the ſecond place, the capital of the debt has involved ſuch an immenſe maſs of public intereſt in its preſervation or deſtruction, that inaſmuch as thoſe events depend on the ſtability of the government, and that government, from the preceding argument is in a ſtate of monopoly, the intereſts of an immenſe claſs of citizens are nearly identified with thoſe of the miniſter of the day. This has induced, in my opinion, the whole of that long and immenſe detail of incroachments on popular right and liberty, with which the preſent century, and particularly our own times, have abounded. The conſequence of a loſs of liberty is naturally attended with an indifference to it; and a preponderance of thoſe ſelfiſh motives, by which

which at firſt that liberty had been overthrown. Or rather, it would be more correct to ſay, that the ſubſtitution of a ſyſtem of ſelfiſh motives, in the room of ſocial, deſtroys that *ſpirit of liberty*, which Lord Bolingbroke has juſtly ſaid, is not only that, without which forms of government or law are a dead letter; but that, which, without forms of government or law, at ſome time or other, will enable the people to aſſert their rights. But it may be obſerved, alſo, that although inſtitutions and forms of freedom are produced by its ſpirit, yet that when created, they react on the ſpirit of liberty, by infuſing into it from time to time, the vigour and energy that are eſſential to its exiſtence. Hence Machiavel obſerves, that thoſe governments are beſt, which are drawn back the oftenеſt to their original principles. For the form is the ſign and character of the principle; and in government, as well as religion, externals are of ſovereign uſe. But in this country, it has been as vain for a long time paſt to look for the form of liberty as its ſpirit: there is ſcarce a ſingle barrier which our anceſtors planted againſt the encroachments of the crown, that has not been removed; and although ſome ceremonies of the old worſhip of freedom are preſerved, its ſpirit and devotion are, alas! extinct in the people.

There is another conſequence from the predominance of ſelfiſh intereſts, which is, that the ſpirit of liberty, which has been really dead, has been ſupplied by a baſtard principle, the ſpirit of faction. "Octavius "has a party in the ſenate, and ſo has Anthony, but "the

" but the commonwealth has none." That feeling or concern for political affairs, which ſhould have been a general intereſt, has become a perſonal attachment. And the conſequence has been, that as all the leaders of parties have had equally the language of liberty in their mouths when out of office, and betrayed its intereſts when in; the people from finding all profeſſions equally falſe, and all public men equally perfidious, have at laſt grown into a belief, that all politics are equally diſhoneſt, and every patriot equally inſincere.

But theſe evils, although deſtructive of public happineſs, have been ſlow in their growth, and inſenſible in their approaches. There is another, and well I am convinced, that it is the moſt alarming evil if rightly conſidered which can light on a country circumſtanced as this is, that appears likely to reſult from the poſture of your finances, and the burthens which are about to be laid on the people.

I cannot ſay that this evil is of ſudden growth, becauſe it certainly has been in a leſs degree apparent for a long time paſt; although you were either unwilling or unable to trace its real cauſe or to remove it. It is the deſtruction of thoſe *Republican manners* which our ſocial relations had produced and perpetuated: the ſtrength, the *ſtamina*, the pillar, the fountain head of old Engliſh hardihood of character. It is this glorious principle that has reſiſted the influence of thoſe cauſes, which have in other countries wrought

wrought the fall of Empires—that has enabled you ſo often to repair your loſſes ; and to ariſe with unſubdued energy, from each ſucceſſive diſaſter. It is this which has preſerved amidſt your people in the boſom of corruption, and even " luxurious effeminacy" their virtue ; from that happy temper, which combined the excellencies of the more civilized and the ruder ſtates of ſociety ; which united the "elegant humanities" of refinement, with the independent virtues of ſimplicity ; which prevented the people on one hand from ſinking into ferocity and groſſneſs ; and on the other the higher orders of the ſtate from being corrupted by the inſolence of that corporation ſpirit, which their nominal diſtinction from the people might otherwiſe have inſpired. For it was the rare and happy fortune of this nation, to preſent on the ſame day, the ſpectacle of a government compoſed of the moſt ariſtocratical relations, and a ſociety governed by the ſpirit of the moſt abſolute equality. The Peer and the Prince were the Peer and the Prince only, when cloathed in their robes of ſtate, and inveſted with the functions of their political capacities ; but, when they ceaſed to legiſlate, to repreſent the authorities of the nation, they laid aſide their dignities and diſtinctions, at the threſhold of the ſenate, and returned to the great maſs of the people, and to the enjoyment of ſocial comforts, and the exerciſe of ſocial duties, as mere private men. Hence although they at particular ſeaſons, acted the part of a claſs,

and

and caſt of ſeparate and inſulated intereſts, and affected the feelings and the language of ſuch a character; yet it was mimitic and not real: the habits of their lives, their affections, their paſſions, their connexions, all that ſweetens and adorns exiſtence, centered in the people. On the other hand, the gradations of ſociety from the higheſt to the loweſt, were ſo ſmooth and gentle, that the approach of the private citizen to the noble, was eaſy and familiar. The *gentleman* of ſmall but independant fortune, the merchant or the opulent tradeſman, even the Engliſh yeoman, ſaw aſſembled at their board, all ranks of ſociety; and the charm of ſocial intercourſe effectually wore away all remembrance of his ſuperiority from the mind of the Peer, and all ſenſe of inferior condition from the mind of the peaſant. Hence oppreſſion was prevented on one part, and malignant envy and hatred on the other. And it is this principle, the characteriſtic of Engliſh life, that has held together the frame of your government, that has made the governed attached to its form, and patient of it's reſtraint, and the governors attentive to the feelings, the declared opinions and known intereſts of the people.

Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diverſa, tamen qualis decet eſſe ſororum.

It is with the ſincereſt grief of heart that I have long ſeen the vital principle of this ſyſtem faſt wearing away; and it is with dread, that in the new mode of

finance, I contemplate the power, that "at one fell ſweep," will efface all that remains of the charities and habitudes of Engliſh ſociety.

For by impoſing ſuch burthens on the people, you take from them the power of maintaining their former connexion and intercourſe with the higher orders. You take away that ſyſtem of habits that has been the nurſe of reciprocal attachment and ſympathy. And man is the creature of habits. Other modes of life will induce other opinions. When once a man is reduced to plebeian circumſtance, he imbibes plebeian malignity; when he is no longer able to contemplate his ſuperior in the amiable light of a private friend and a kind neighbour; when he no longer meets him in the midſt of domeſtic endearments, and ſocial charities, exerciſing the duties of a father, a huſband, the maſter of a family, or an indulgent landlord; he no longer remembers any thing but his invidious ſuperiority, he thinks only of him as a being cloathed with power and ſplendour, inveſted with the authorities of the ſtate, and bleſſed with enjoyments, of which he is, as he conceives, unjuſtly deprived. Dreadful therefore is the influence of ſevere taxation on a free people, becauſe it undermines thoſe ſecurities on which the energy of that freedom muſt of neceſſity depend: for what will it avail us, that Weſtminſter Hall ſtands where it did, that the letter of the conſtitution, and the ſtatute book remain as they have been in ages paſt, if thoſe manners, that ſpirit, and

that

that national character are no more, which were the parents, and which muſt be the ſupports of their exiſtence. Laws and inſtitutions are only inſtrumental: it is the wiſdom, the reaſon, and the will of the nation from whence they ſprung, that are the firſt cauſes and the active principles of their utility.

Quid valeant leges ſine moribus

is as true in Great Britain as it was at Rome.

It remains to me, to examine in what manner the ſecurity of the people has been reſpected by the government; or in other words, in what manner their lives and property have been protected by it! I know that to expreſs a general abhorrence of the war ſyſtem, to enlarge on its miſchiefs and crime, to expoſe the depraved inconſiſtency of inſtitutions, which puniſh with death and infamy the wretch who is driven to the commiſſion of a ſingle murder, by want or any other dire neceſſity, and which at the ſame time give the word to ſlaughter thouſands of the human race, and lay waſte the faireſt ſcenes of God's creation, for the cold-blooded purpoſes of ſpeculative policy, is to be guilty of an abſurd and irrational fanaticiſm. Mankind are unfortunately ſo familiarized to the tale and ſpectacle of ſlaughter, that their moſt virtuous ſenſibilities are corrupted by thoſe paſſions of glory, which the names of their deſtroyers awaken, and the recital of their exploits inflame.

Yet, ſurely, when we read the apologies for ſyſtematic maſſacre, with which our libraries, our ſenate, and even our churches, abound, to which the energies of reaſon, the charms of eloquence, and even the divine authority of the goſpel have been made ſubſervient, we muſt either be convulſed with ſhame and grief, if what they ſay is true, or if it be falſe, tremble with virtuous indignation at the "ſelf-abuſe," the miſchievous falſehood, and blaſphemous hypocriſy of which man is guilty. Is deſtruction the law of our nature, the neceſſity of our condition, the original ſin of providence itſelf? Is that only criminal which is committed in paltry detail, when it is glorious in groſs and on ſyſtem? Does the ſame voice that brought the glad tidings of peace and ſalvation to man, whoſe great commandment was univerſal love, whoſe goſpel came with healing on its wings, and whoſe author is himſelf the prince of peace, the brighteſt, the pureſt, example of patient and long ſuffering benevolence; is that voice to blow the trumpet of war, and ſound the charge of hatred and bloodſhed to the frantic nations? When ſuch doctrines are held in the face, and to the inſult of the feelings and the reaſon of an enlightened age, when that age acts on them, ſurely theſe are the tricks which the fools of nature play before high heaven, and which may well make angels weep to contemplate them. But, be that as it may, in common prudence, how can we boaſt of the ſecurity which

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we have enjoyed, when out of a century our lives and property have been ſubject to the diſorders and dangers of forty-ſeven years of warfare? When in conſequence of the wars in which we have been engaged and that in which we are engaged, 25,000,000 are to be deducted yearly from the produce of the induſtry of the people.

Such is the caſe of the governed; as to their liberty, their morals, their public ſpirit, and their general happineſs: what is the ſtate of the government?

Never ſurely was there ſo awful, ſo anxious a moment in the hiſtory of mankind, never ſo portentous a criſis of human affairs, as that on which the ſenate of England now deliberates. It is no longer on ſubordinate points of policy, on party queſtions, on domeſtic diſputes, that they muſt decide; but by the iſſue of their councils, the fate of this country is to be irrevocably determined. With what emotions of virtuous anxiety, with what energy of reſolution ought not the repreſentatives of the people to approach the exerciſe of their functions, ſince every eye is upon them, and the part which they ſhall act in the awful drama of this day; for the pen of hiſtory ſhall be ſuſpended, when ſhe ſhall hereafter be about to record a period ſo eventful, and an occaſion ſo full of deſtiny! They have told the people that the emergency of the common weal is ſo great, as to call for every ſacrifice and exertion from the private citizen; there-

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fore the private citizen muſt naturally, in his turn, look to them for that diſplay of public wiſdom and virtue, by which alone the country can be ſaved. How have his expectations been anſwered? *That ſenate which is to cope with the councils of France, has ſeen three of its members ſecede; and not a man appears to take their place!!!* For no one in his ſenſes will pretend to ſay, that thoſe who carry on the farce of an oppoſition, are capable of ſupplying the loſs of ſuch a man as Mr. Fox. Surely if men, (as they too often do in the eyes of the world) perſonify opinions, Mr. Pitt can hardly wiſh that ſuch an opponent as Sir John Sinclair would be ſilent. I know that I ſhall be told, that this phænomenon is owing to the unanimity of that auguſt aſſembly: but is the occaſion on which they deliberate, ſuch as reaſonably to induce unanimity? *Are the people unanimous without doors?* And is it this tame, this puſillanimous principle of unanimity, that could beat down the tall aſpiring form of generous ambition, that could ſubdue "that laſt infirmity of noble minds," "by which fell the angels," "the glorious faults of gods" and godlike men, if it exiſted with all its attributes and energies of mind about it in the Britiſh ſenate, when it deliberates on the means of ſaving the common-wealth?

At leaſt the legiſlature of France, at no period of public diſtreſs and danger, exhibited a ſimilar example. Though her parties and ſyſtems have followed each other faſter than wave chaſes wave; though the

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the emigrant race of politicians, the Conſtitutionaliſts of 1789, the Briſſotines, the Mountaineers, the Royaliſts of 1797, have ſucceeded each other in authority and fate; yet does France diſplay leſs wiſdom or eloquence in her debates, leſs ſagacity in the views of her policy, or leſs effect and vigour in the execution of them? If with my Lord Bacon we believe that man is but what he knoweth, and that knowledge is therefore power, may we not fear leſt at ſome time or other, "the race ſhould be to the ſwift, and the battle to the ſtrong."

I have now ſubmitted to you my opinion of the ſtate of the country. It is with you to determine, and act, as it ſuits your judgment. One word, however, before I conclude, as to my own motives: for at a period of public anxiety and ferment, like the preſent, it is difficult ſo to conduct yourſelf as not to be ſubject to miſapprehenſion. I declare then, that I have addreſſed theſe conſiderations to you, not only from no ſeditious intention whatever, but from the deepeſt anxiety for the fate of my country, and a greater intereſt in the welfare of its propertied orders, than they may, perhaps give me credit for. It is not only becauſe I am a foe to revolution, but becauſe I would ſacrifice all and every thing of perſonal intereſt to prevent it, that I have publiſhed my opinions. And if that opinion is true, *what will it avail you that the law has declared truth to be a libel.* But that opinion is directly againſt the reign of the people. Corrupt, ignorant,

ignorant, deluded—they are, alas! only capable of the dreadful energy of ſuicide. To truſt the complicated affairs of a great empire, the decompoſition of its whole ſocial ſyſtem, and the eſtabliſhment of a new one, to their uninformed minds, and ſavage paſſions, would be worſe than madneſs in any man; thoſe only would do it, thoſe half-witted politicians, whoſe minds diſtempered by diſappointed vanity, and the dangerous poſſeſſion, of a little learning, talk about Liberty, Equality, and the Rights of Man; whoſe only liberty is a ferocious indulgence of their paſſions; whoſe equality, is the dragging down their ſuperiors to their own level; and whoſe notions of right, are a permiſſion to commit wrong. Such men as theſe

> " Would bring mankind back to their woods
> " and caves,
> " And cry that all but ſavages are ſlaves."

It is to prevent their reign, that I call on you; on you, whoſe influence, whoſe education, whoſe habits of life ſhould enable you to diſcern the cauſe of the evil, and to ſupply the remedy: to prevent your lying down to ſleep, in the flattering but deluſive ſecurity that "to morrow will be fair;" to prevent the continuance of a ſcene, which is the diſgrace of this country, and the triumph of it's enemies; and which if it is not changed by timely reform, will be put an end to, by thoſe terrible energies which nature ſometimes

ſometimes calls up in the miſeries and madneſs of mankind.

There is nothing ſo eaſy, and nothing more frequent than ſelf deceit. Drowning wretches, it is ſaid, will catch at ſtraws; and thoſe who are addicted to a darling error, are obliged to any friend who will furniſh a defence of it: but the worſt of this plauſible philoſophy is, that it's votaries generally *commit the action, and then hunt for the apology.* And where is the action which ſophiſtry cannot palliate and recommend? So in political affairs, and particularly with reſpect to this country, all timely reform has been procraſtinated or rejected, becauſe mankind have been unable to make a virtuous ſacrifice of their reigning habits or paſſions whilſt a hope remained that the cruel neceſſity could be avoided. And they have endeavoured to delude themſelves into the opinion, that they acted from principle. Hence have we ſeen elaborate treatiſes in favour of tyranny and corruption, from profeſſed friends to the conſtitution and reverend miniſters of religion. And hence at every ſucceſſive period, at which the queſtion of reform has been preſented to the nation or it's Parliament, the danger of innovation, and the want of any ſpecific remedy to the grievances complained of, have been reiterated. As to the firſt objection, let it be ſufficient to remark with Mr. Burke that *to innovate is not to reform*; it will be quite ſufficient to the wants of the people, if the country was reſtored

to the "propriety" of thoſe old and reſpectable habits of life, of civil liberty and ſocial intercourſe, from which it has been "frighted:" if its government was brought back to thoſe principles of public intereſt, by which it was once ſecured; if it's governors carried the virtues of an unblemiſhed private life into the exerciſe of their public functions: and if the people, inſtead of being an ignorant and corrupt rabble, the ſubject of compaſſion to their friends and deriſion to their haters, were taught by the precept of their ſuperiors to underſtand what virtue and knowledge meant, and to admire and cultivate them by their example. And as to the other contemptible but hacknied objection, that it is eaſy to detect error, and complain of evil, without ſuggeſting a remedy; are thoſe that talk thus, ignorant *that no remedy was ever yet diſcovered without a pre-exiſting evil*: that falſe notions in ſcience ſtimulated the ſublime faculties of a Newton to the diſcovery of his immortal ſyſtem: that the unremedied infirmities of human nature have been the cauſes of that improvement, to which the ſtudies of anatomy and medicine have been brought: and that it is therefore equally reaſonable, for the citizen of every ſtate freely and loudly to complain of public diſaſter and grievance, ſince thereby haply may be raiſed up to her, ſome maſter ſpirit capable of redeeming the age he lives in, and of reſtoring to his nation, like another Scipio, the peace and glory which ſhe had loſt. But even this ſubterfuge remains

mains not to the Engliſh public. Need I recal to your memories thoſe illuſtrious names by which the page of our hiſtory is adorned: whoſe labours were devoted to the cultivation of thoſe arts of peace by which the happineſs and condition of mankind are extended and improved: of arts, more glorious than all the triumphs that war ever ſhowered on the conqueror, or intrigue on the politician: the ſtudy and endeavour to render mankind, wiſer, better, and therefore happier, than they were. It is to the truths which they taught, the diſcoveries which they made, and the meaſures they recommended, that I would call your attention. The evils that exiſt in our day in a greater degree, were not unknown, unfelt, undeplored, although they were unhappily unremedied in theirs. The corruption of the government, and people, the decay of public virtue, and the decline of national proſperity, called forth the zeal and energy, of the patriarchs of Engliſh liberty: of the Hampdens, the Sydneys and the Ruſſells of former times: of the Somers and Godolphins: the St. Aubyns, Chathams, Camdens and Savilles of a later period; and of all the moſt diſtinguiſhed public characters of our own. Of theſe it is true, all have been equally unfortunate: and one of theſe, Sir George Saville, recorded his opinion and deſpair of the ſtate of the nation, by a ſolemn appeal to his conſtituents: let it not therefore be ſaid by you, that you are without a guide: again and again has

the path and the only path to ſalvation been pointed out to you, although you have been deaf to the voice of warning, and with the perverſe ingratitude by which the public of moſt countries, but particularly of this have been diſtinguiſhed, perſecuted and reviled your real and generous friends, and branded with the ſtigmas of treaſon and rebellion thoſe illuſtrious men whom an age of liberty and reaſon would have adored, and of whom the preſent "world is not worthy."

If the evils and dangers of your ſituation are really ſuch as I have deſcribed them to be, you cannot therefore lay this "flattering unction" to your ſouls, that the means have not been pointed out, by which they can be remedied and averted. Thoſe means conſiſt ſimply in *national reform*. Not in the reform, that is ſuppoſed to be the watch-word of a political faction; not the œconomy of "cheeſe-parings and candle-ends;" not a reform in part and in detail, but in principle and ſyſtem. Firſt, are the manners of the people, corrupt; what is their ſource? The government. Therefore the government ſhould have its abuſes corrected. Has the public ſpirit and virtue of the nation declined; let thoſe who are at the head of its claſſes and intereſts, begin the reſtoration of ancient patriotiſm, and a purer morality. And let it be remembered that this reform, like all other works of a ſimilar nature, muſt begin in the efforts and examples of individuals. It is true that all this will exact from the public, what under the influence of

of reigning habits, they will deem a difficult and painful ſacrifice: viz. *that they will dare to be honeſt:* for proſperity has ever been the handmaid of virtue. The path therefore which you muſt tread, will I fear ſeem rugged and ſteep to the feet of luxury and ſelfiſhneſs; yet it is the path, which the moſt ſhining examples of human virtue have trodden before; and if it does not allure by the blandiſhments of pleaſure and repoſe, ſtill it conducts to the temples of honour, and the dwellings of peace.

O that mankind had adhered to the ſimple but delightful maxim of our religion, the ſum and perfection of all our duties! To act by others, as we wiſh that they would act by us. What rivers of blood, what ages of miſery would not have been ſpared the human race! Had you done thus, when you ought to have appealed to this moral teſt, for the regulation of your conduct, what would not have been the proſperity and happineſs of this people, at the preſent hour. Had you done ſo, inſtead of offering up prayers that were a mockery of providence; inſtead of indulging in arrogant and fooliſh invective againſt jacobins and levellers, becauſe you were righteous over much; inſtead of liſtening with delight to the homilies of your clergy, which were a *comment of war on the goſpels of peace*; you would, by the ſpirit of a mild devotion and exemplary morality; by not hating and perſecuting even thoſe who hated and perſecuted you; and by diſplaying the excellence

excellence of your government, in the bleſſings of of order and peace, have proved the ſuperiority of your faith, your morality, and your conſtitution. But what has been your conduct? You have "kept the word of promiſe to the ear, and broke it to the hope." In 1792, when the country was flouriſhing in her people and reſources, you thought proper to raiſe the cry of war againſt the French, and of alarm againſt your fellow-citizens. How loud and ſolemn was the pledge of your zeal over conſtitutional dinners, and loyal bumpers! how active were its exertions! The ſyſtem of ſocial inquiſition, which you and your leader, Mr. Chairman Reeves, eſtabliſhed over the face of the country, ſpared neither the palace from its ſtate, nor the cottage from its inſignificance. Give me leave to tell you, that though you did this, as you profeſſed, to preſerve the Engliſh conſtitution, yet, by doing it, you did more to injure and overthrow it than all the harangues of Thelwall, or writings of Paine. Diſtruſt, revenge, intolerance, an odious diſtinction of intereſts between the higher and lower orders; an hatred of liberty on one part, a frantic licentiouſneſs on the other; a complacency towards ſlavery, oppoſed to a fanatical impatience of all government, have been the fruits of your wiſe aſſociations, of your pledge to ſupport the government with your lives and fortunes. For, in that ſtorm of conflicting paſſions, in the rage of oppoſite extremes, the genius of the Britiſh conſtitution was overwhelmed

whelmed and vanquiſhed. And do you now think that your perſecuting ſpirit and frantic alarm, becauſe it was armed with the thunders of the ſtate, *has* ſecured the conſtitution from Jacobins and Levellers? Let the progreſſive increaſe of reſtraints on the liberty of popular diſcuſſion and meeting ſpeak to this fact. You dare not truſt the people. You know that they are not converted or ſatisfied, becauſe they are ſilent: for you ought to know, that to increaſe burthen and grievance, is not the way to remove complaint and diſſaffection; nor is it the happieſt mode of retaining the affection and confidence of the people, to pledge your lives and fortunes to them for the ſupport of the war, when your lives and fortunes were not wanted; and when they were, to abandon your pledge and your country at the ſame time, and, ſheltering yourſelves in a cowardly obſcurity, leave the people to finiſh a conteſt as well as they can, in which they embarked *on your behalf alone*.

So much for your juſtice, your charity, your ſincerity. One word more let me add on the ſcore of policy before I take my leave of you, and I have done. If you were ſincere in your alarm in 1792, and thought the pledge of your lives and fortunes neceſſary to preſerve the government, what muſt be your fears, and what ought to be your exertions, in 1798? In 1792, the nation, from the bleſſings of peace, and the adoption of ſome prudent meaſures,

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was recovering faſt from her former calamities. Public happineſs, at leaſt, in thoſe reſpects, in which it is ſenſibly felt by the people, had increaſed and was increaſing. The articles of life were cheap, the means of ſubſiſtence eaſy, the public credit reſtored, and its debt in a train of liquidation. In the midſt of this ſcene of growing proſperity, there exiſted a few viſionary enthuſiaſts, and a few turbulent ſpirits, who were clamorous for a change; and who, with the energy of all riſing ſects, were active in the propagation of their doctrines. But the little effect that they had produced on the public mind, is proved from the ſtate of their numbers and reſources, at the late trials for high treaſon; and ſtill more by the general, and even violent, expreſſions of loyalty which your alarms and aſſociations produced throughout the country. In 1798 the ſubject has been deprived of the eſſence of his political exiſtence; whilſt by the enormous expences of the war, and its baneful effects on induſtry, he is at once commanded to pay a contribution, and robbed of all means of raiſing it. Let me aſk you then, whether theſe facts are not more dangerous illuſtrations of the truth of levelling principles, the juſtice of diſcontent, and the neceſſity of plans of innovation, than all that the labours of the London Correſponding Society could have afforded. Theſe are proofs unfortunately "ſenſible to feeling as to ſight." A reforming orator might harangue from a field pulpit for ever on liberty, truth, and mind, in the jargon

gon of a ſyſtem abſurd in itſelf, and not underſtood by its advocates themſelves, and he would be heard without material danger, *becauſe the people are not worked up to inſurrection, without great and inveterate oppreſſions.* They will not lay aſide their received prejudices and ordinary habits, without ſtrong neceſſity. A demagogue, therefore, never yet has, and never will excite them to violence, by ſpeculative truths and diſtant motives. But give him facts to reaſon with, and he is dangerouſly armed. Inſtead of talking of the Rights of Man, let him point to their ſtarving families, ſtate to them the price of proviſions and labour; and inſinuate that theſe are the reſults of their political ſyſtem, and they will not only think but act with him. The people heed not remote conſequences: *to relieve pain is the inſtinct of nature, and to relieve it by the ſpeedieſt means.*

If therefore you are inſenſible to motives of an higher nature, let mere ſelfiſh policy prevail with you to lay aſide this ruinous diſhoneſty. The die is not yet caſt; although the balance trembles with your fate. The people have not yet renounced you: you are, even now, the children of one parent; the brethren of a common family. Let your reign be the reign of affection, not of fear; and there is nothing which kindneſs and benevolence may not do with the Engliſh people. You have, by your ruinous ſyſtem, degraded, oppreſſed, and corrupted them; but there ſtill remains about them ſo much moral ſenſibility, if

not principle, that a little attention to their preſent wants would baniſh all remembrance of former hardſhip and ſuffering from their minds. If you dread the people, from their diſcontents, is it not wiſe to remove the cauſe of that alarm? If you are compelled to wage a war in which you want their aſſiſtance, is it not reaſonable that you, who are to reap the advantage of the victory, ſhould endure the hazard of the conflict? If peace, however, is the pearl of price, if ſuffering humanity and ſelf-preſervation invite you to put an end to the horrors of bloodſhed, ſhould the paltry conſiderations of a ſugar or a ſpice iſland prevent or delay the return of ſo dear a bleſſing? It is not only "vanity and crime," when the blood of man is ſhed for other purpoſes "than to redeem the blood of man;" but it is an abſurd impiety to ſuppoſe, that the Deity can proſper a nation whoſe conduct is governed by the motives of ſo horrid and diabolical a policy: and if you really hope or wiſh for the return of peace, do you believe that it ever will be obtained on a ſecure footing, until you have ſolemnly renounced the principles on which the war was begun and continued; until you have diſmiſſed thoſe men from power in whom *hoſtility to France is a ſecond nature?* Place yourſelves in the ſituation of the French nation; remember what they have ſuffered, what they might have expected, what they know and feel; and then ſay whether, in your conſciences, you ſhould wiſh or endure to receive even peace *from thoſe very*

very hands that are yet ſtreaming with the blood of your ſlaughtered fellow citizens! Not until the memories of the French are obliterated, can they hear the name of Pitt without indignant frenzy; the whole nature of man muſt be reverſed if they did: nor can he be the reſtorer of peace to the two nations; *for the deſtroying angel does not at the ſame time carry death and healing on his wings.*

And oh! above all things, diveſt yourſelves, ere it is too late, of that falſe and treacherous ſecurity into which you are lulled by the apparent torpor of the people; it is neither content or patience. Alas! they do not feel the leſs keenly, becauſe they dare not meet to pour out their indignant griefs on the boſoms of each other. But their "curſes, although not loud, are deep;" if they are not publiſhed from the houſe-top, and on the highway, they are murmured from the gloom of dungeons and hovels. Their ſituation has ſo much phyſical ſuffering in it, that they muſt perforce both feel and think; and, whatever the verdict that they ſhall ſooner or later return, may be, let it be recollected, that it will be the voice of Fate, which can neither be recalled or reſiſted.

From the Government I have no hope: they are infatuated. It is with them, as with all eſtabliſhments, their misfortune and fault, to imagine that they can render themſelves immortal; forgetting that they, in common with all works of time, muſt be ſubject to its influence; and that it is not given to any

thing under the ſun to be "incapable of perverſion, and exempt from decay." Civil government is, or ought to be, the creature of circumſtance; for it is a code of rules, adapted to the exiſting neceſſities and relations of a community. To perpetuate inſtitutions when their end and reaſon are no more, argues therefore rather an irrational ſuperſtition, than a decent and honorable reverence.

The experience of your own lives muſt have taught you, gentlemen, that in human affairs *example is every thing*. It is ſo in public as well as in private Life. What volumes have been written on morality, whoſe contents are either unknown or forgotten! What laborious reſearch has been expended on the theory of government, without having contributed to the liberty or happineſs of the world! But when lived there a good man, who did not extend the bleſſings of his character beyond the mere circle of perſonal agency by the influence of his example; and when lived there a real patriot that did not become the polar ſtar of the nation that was bleſſed with his exiſtence? If then ſuch things can be done by the example of one honeſt man; if ſinking nations have been ſaved by the virtue of an individual citizen, what might not a community do, every member of which was impreſſed with the godlike imagination, that on his ſingle effort the fate of his country depended? What is there in nature ſo impoſſible, which

which the energy of ſuch a people could not ſurmount?

It is to the ſaving influence of this ſentiment, could it but become general amongſt the people of England; and not to rhetorical artifice, to appeals to the paſſions, to diplomatic morals, or a ſcheme of political action conceived in a ſpirit of detail, that you can look for ſafety, or even for exiſtence. You have trodden the path of diſhoneſty long enough, and to no purpoſe; try now then if better things may not be obtained by acting up to *the honeſt* in public as well as in private life. The ſcience of politics you have been told, is an abſtruſe and entangled ſtudy. I will not poſitively aſſert, that it has been hitherto found ſo, from a vain endeavour to act right on wrong principles; but of thus much I am ſure, that it is at leaſt worth the experiment to the happineſs of mankind, to try whether, by ſubſtituting plain dealing and ſpeaking in the place of equivocation and fraud, the profound myſteries of government may not be reſolved into ſimple truths, and its ways of vice and evil become thoſe of pleaſantneſs and peace.

If, however, you are determined to perſevere in the old ſyſtem; if, as formerly, you diſclaim all compromiſe, all conceſſion; if you are reſolved to coerce, and not conciliate, and to think that thoſe who are not with you are againſt you—only take care, leſt you are taken at your words, and leſt thoſe who are not with you ſhall be againſt you; for you are faſt

reducing

reducing this country to a choice of alternatives; and if that choice muſt be made, dreadful as it is, he would be the vileſt of cowards and ſlaves that does not ſay, if governments and privileged orders are juſt to the people, may they be eternal! but if they are not, let the people be juſt to themſelves; for governments and privileges may have an end, but the people ſhall live for ever.

FINIS.